

Horizon

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

**FRENCH AND ENGLISH CULTURAL
RELATIONS**

by CYRIL CONNOLLY

THE CARILLON

by VIOLET TREFUSIS

BACK TO METTERNICH

by CZESLAW POZNANSKI

A NOTE ON HENRY JAMES

by SHANE LESLIE

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HORIZON

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CYRIL CONNOLLY, *Observer* 10/6

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GEORGE BARKER

SACRED ELEGIES

ELEGY I

i

From this window where the North Atlantic
Takes the crow in my mind home in a short line
Over the kissing fish in the wave, and the mine
Where the sailor clasps his death as mermaid like
Sex of a knife in the deb, from this window
Watching I see the farewelling seasons fall
Ever between us like rain. And the lachrymal
Memory, trailing its skirts, walks like a widow
Across those seas looking for home. O my Dido
Heart! Sail, sail the ships ever away from us all.

ii

Then at this midnight as instant as the bell
That bangs the sailor from his bed to Europe,
I see tomorrow grow in a tree of hope
Outside the window where, like a branch with a ball,
Your face of kisses hangs in my love
Shattered and happy. The sixteen winds that blow
The small seeds into each other's arms below,
The birds to their boughs above, the sad and evil
Everywhere, shall bring to you, if nothing else avail,
The love that, never coming, always goes.

iii

To cross the divide and desert of this distance
Only a hand is enough. Like the seamew sweeping
The wave with a wing to rise up weeping
The parted heart shall with a bird's persistence
Cross seven oceans to its proper home. The pigeon
With a hundred hieroglyphics at its claw
Less laden drops down with what's waited for
Than the sea-weary heart returning. O let love imagine
Meetings of the long parted at the door
Of expectation with happiness in the margin.

iv

Lovers for whom the world is always absent
 Move in their lonely union like twin stars
 Twining bright destinies around their cause:
 They dazzle to shadow with a meridian present
 The wallflower world. Redundant it shall resent
 The kiss that annihilates it and the gaze that razes.
 O from their clasp a new astronomy rises
 Where, morning and evening, the dominant Venus
 Dismisses all sad worlds that turn between us
 And we shall kiss behind our mask of faces.

ELEGY II

i

Peace for explorers who come late upon water
 I call the kiss of the foot on its native stone
 After the separation of seas and the strange zone.
 The madmen wandering across wildernesses, later
 Look up and see the palatial womb and the home.
 The maternal mirage lifts up its arms and says, 'Come'.
 Cold under bridges a stranger freezes. The lost
 Tankers leading their sad cortège in from the North
 Not knowing which hemisphere gave them birth,
 Shall sigh up their smoke sinking at last to rest.

ii

Speak, then, of peace where the white child lies quiet
 Sleeping in shadows between privation and pain:
 Where the pink daughter drops back to bed again
 After the visitor in the sheets, and red as riot
 My father rises and condemns society.
 Let us speak of peace among the proletariat
 Protesting against life with a flag and a slogan,
 Resigned to the empty gesture and the empty
 Belly. Speak, then, of peace before death began
 Foreclosing on the not yet buried man.

iii

The Decalogue is written on their sheets
 Where, watching life through windows, (the fish
 Flying in wind, tattering trees with wishes,)
 Exiled from existence, the invalids, like secrets,
 Inhabit amber rooms. Only the dream completes
 The landscape of that odd island where they dwell
 With the two-headed child and the ghost. Their lives
 File past the foot of the bed like negatives.
 O the castaways in bedrooms! Exiled they shall
 See Patmos visions exalting all creatives.

iv

Far from his home he dies in beds or deserts
With all the necessary angels at his head,
The lover in fever and poverty. The remembered
Image of Love comes down and, hushing his hurts,
Folds him in wide arms and takes him to that dream
For which he was always seeking. The maternal
Mirage emerges in tremors of eternal
Concern. 'Come to the womb, come, for it is home.'
O invalids in love and indigence, return
To the hands of stars and the universal bosom!

ELEGY III

i

The laurelled skull spoke from St. Helena:
'Cold kingdom. Huddled in cloaks of pride on peaks
The giant egoists freeze among the wrecks
Of conscience and custom. Cæsar has been
Set snarling at large in the ethical arena.
All law is down. The giant egoists, mad
As engine drivers from responsibility
Mow down their Roehms in the insensibility
Of pride gone berserk and vanity gone bad.'
Alone on the altitudes alive and dead.

ii

Standing with the Vistula in his hand
Russia with large moustaches shall see Peace
Militant. The megalomaniacal secretary cease
To castigate the philosophical contraband.
Sacred in crystal Stalin shall sleep and
Be illegally illustrious. But at his foot
The dachshund and the private diamond lie.
Somewhere an Austrian corporal shall be mute
At whose word once, from Europe to the sky
Suddenly everyone everywhere began to die.

iii

The colossal Apollo. The sky-writer with
Guilt in his thumbmark, the poet with the human
Hanging at hand, cut with a verb to the nerve,
Rabbits at butchers. The arrogant wreath
Bright at his face, the Mephistophelean omen,
Both wards away and draws a man and woman.
O seeking at all altars a Sibiline to serve
Either in beds or wars, he finds only
The anthropoid I gibbering from mirrors. Lonely
The poet walks among a score of selves.

HORIZON

iv

Akimbo on mountains the heroic egoist
 With poems or murders or empires in his pocket
 May also remember Love. Sometimes a dove has kissed,
 And, leaving a lock of conscience in a locket,
 Haunted him with memories of the human.
 Then from his loneliness will rise up sorrowing
 The spectre of what is lost; the common growing
 That gives the grass its ergotocratic green.
 The solitary heroes. Who shall take them in?
 Glittering they shiver on the rocks of knowing.

v

And we, scissored at birth from the past,
 Step down out of genealogical tapestry,
 Where, shoving shoulders with examples, we
 Rubbed elbows with great precedents. At last
 Liberated independent we are lost,
 The scapegoat generations. The patriarch on his column
 Gazes out on our dilemma like stone.
 What hand can he extend across the schism
 Breaking between us in years? But on our own,
 Clasp a spirit we walk water home.

ELEGY IV

i

Evolving under the architrave of their love
 The lovers, intertwining like doves on a doorknocker,
 Sometimes have joined. And, meeting above,
 Like the springing swords at nuptials of kings,
 The kiss is consummation. From an ark of isolation
 The beasts of love emerge in pairs and bring
 Hymenaeals here. Antitheses meet and look deep
 Into each other's eyes at Love's dictation.
 And on their happy bed in a summer evening
 The Lovers answer Lucretius in their sleep.

ii

But who at the kiss, who has not seen, over
 The waterfalling hair at the shoulder of Life,
 Death from his own face staring out of a glass?
 Some shall be most alone with a lover, never
 Letting the sweating hand unlock the closet of
 The coffined I. O sometimes, nevertheless,
 The labourer at his instrument or tractor,
 Bending into a state of merge with objects,
 Finds the same love that, from a machine of sex,
 Steps down as Venus to her invocator.

iii

Labouring, the lover shall become that Apollo
 Who in a Spanish square stared at a dog
 Till it gave up the ghost and ran off empty.
 Not alone then, the poet shall know temporary
 Weddings with all things: in divine divorce less
 Suffer the alienations of that loneliness
 When, for an instant, awakened in the dark,
 The marital poem, with bouquet and catalogue,
 Gives up her gifts on his bed of the oligarch.
 He shall be joined for an hour with a dog.

iv

Thanatos, thanatos! The labourer, dropping his lever,
 Hides a black letter close to his heart and goes,
 Thanatos, thanatos, home for a day and for ever.
 Crying, from the couch of Venus the emergent Eros
 Breaks free, bursts from the heart of the lover,
 And, at last liberated from the individual,
 The solitary confinement of the evil lease,
 Returns to the perfect. Azrael, Azrael,
 Azrael enters with papers of pardon releasing
 The Christopher poet from an isolated cell.

ELEGY V

i

These errors loved no less than the saint loves arrows
 Repeat, Love has left the world. He is not here.
 O God, like Love revealing yourself in absence
 So that, though farther than stars, like Love that sorrows
 In separation, the desire in the heart of hearts
 To come home to you makes you most manifest.
 The booming zero spins as his halo where
 Ashes of pride on all the tongues of sense
 Crown us with negatives. O deal us in our deserts
 The crumb of falling vanity. It is eucharist!

ii

Everyone walking everywhere goes in a glow
 Of geometrical progression, all meteors, in praise:
 Hosannas on the tongues of the dumb shall raise
 Roads for the gangs in a mind's chains to return to
 God. They go hugging the traumas like halleluias
 To the bodies that earn this beatitude. The Seven
 Seas they crowd like the great sailing Clippers,
 Those homing migrants that, with their swallow-like sails set,
 Swayed forward along the loneliness that opposed,
 For nothing more than a meeting in heaven.

iii

Therefore all things, standing in their stances,
 Alone like the statue in an alcove of love,
 Moving in obedient machinery, sleeping
 Happy in impossible achievements, keeping
 Close to each other because the night is dark;
 The great man dreaming on the stones of circumstances,
 The small wringing hands because rocks will not move:
 The beast in its red kingdom, the star in its arc:
 O all things, therefore, in shapes or in senses,
 Know that they exist in the kiss of his Love.

iv

Incubus. Anæsthetist with glory in a bag,
 Foreman with a sweatbox and a whip. Asphyxiator
 Of the ecstatic. Sergeant with a grudge
 Against the lost lovers in the park of creation.
 Fiend behind the fiend behind the fiend behind the
 Friend. Mastodon with mastery, monster with an ache
 At the tooth of the ego, the dead drunk judge:
 Wheresoever Thou art our agony will find Thee
 Enthroned on the darkest altar of our heartbreak
 Perfect. Beast, brute, bastard. O dog my God!

NOTE

We regret that in a recent issue the price of Gerald Heard's *Man the Master*, published by Faber & Faber, was incorrectly given as 22s. 6d. The price is 10s. 6d.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

FRENCH AND ENGLISH CULTURAL RELATIONS¹

J'aime les auteurs qui ont un mérite susceptible d'être d'autant plus goûté que le monde sera plus civilisé et plus spirituel.

SAINTE-BEUVE

IF we look up the word intellectual in the newest and cheapest English dictionary, *The Everyman*, we find it means an enlightened person. For me 'Enlightened Person' is not quite enough, and so since the word will have to be used more than once, I would like to say that I mean, by this new word intellectual, one who believes in the intellect, one who feels that it is the dark lantern given us to penetrate the blackness of the world we live in, and so our main hope of understanding and improving it. But since I am to talk about culture, and since culture is made by artists and writers who are not all in that sense intellectual, we must allow the word to include those whose lantern-beam proceeds not only from the intelligence but from intuitive flashes of the imagination, and I do not think that this extension of the meaning presents any difficulty, because the intellect includes so much more than the mere faculty of reason and introspection. What we mean by genius is only the intellect proceeding by stages which are too sudden and rapid for conscious thought to follow; as is the case with those athletes and Everest climbers of the mind, physicists, who are at their best when very young, and who after long hours of concentration in the anti-human and almost unbreathable atmosphere of their science, find their minds taking, as Clerk-Maxwell has described, mysterious leaps forward into the unknown. We can measure the powers of the conscious mind, but the powers of an unconscious mind such as that of a profound, noble and original genius, like the Douanier Rousseau, we cannot measure, we know that they are there, and that

¹This is a lecture delivered to the Franco-Scottish House in Edinburgh under the auspices of the British Council. I have reprinted it, in spite of its colloquial language, because it seems to me that it may renew the interest of some readers of *HORIZON* in the classics of French literature, and what it lacks in originality make up by enthusiasm. C. C.

they belong to the intellect as a submerged mountain range belongs to the islands that dot the Ægean sea.

Not only then do I believe in the intellect, but I believe that all occupations which do not serve the greatness of the intellect are so much waste of time. If the way in which we occupy ourselves, apart from necessary relaxation, is a way which provides no data for the mind in its struggle to master the conditions of life, the nature of happiness, and the meaning of existence, then we had better give it up. I believe in the absolute validity of Pascal's axiom: *Penser fait la grandeur de l'homme*.

There are four types of intellectual who have helped the evolutionary process of humanity: the philosopher, the scientist, the artist and the mystic. They are the true creative beings, and all rulers and administrators of mankind, however much they may have alleviated the common lot, are only in the long run important for having provided or not provided the conditions favourable for such creators to arise. So different have been the political systems of the world, so different the climates, the faiths, the racial characteristics, and the opportunities of human beings that only in certain parts of the world have these four kinds of intellectuals been permitted to flourish. Scientists, for example, are confined almost exclusively to Western Europe, Russia in Europe, and North America; philosophers have much the same range, and that of artists is not much larger, though here China and India have made a great contribution, and in the case of mystics, a preponderant one. But when we come down to what the Western mind accepts as the supreme level in art, literature, philosophy and science, that is, the great men of the last fifty years, our map of genius becomes still smaller. In England and Scotland we have had the great physicists and Sir James Frazer; we have had some considerable but not great writers, like Moore, and Hardy, Lawrence, Strachey and Mrs. Woolf; we have one artist in Sickert and one poet in Hopkins, and we have acclimatized some valuable Americans: T. S. Eliot, Whistler and Henry James. Ireland produced the poet Yeats, the dramatist Shaw and his contemporary, Oscar Wilde, and the philosopher-novelist, James Joyce; from Vienna came Freud and the other analysts; from Russia, Tchekhov, Tolstoy, Stravinsky and Diaghilef, and a philosopher in action, Lenin; from Central Europe Rilke and Kafka; from Germany, Einstein and Thomas Mann, Wittgenstein,

with his logical positivism, which took root at Cambridge; from Italy, Croce and Pareto, D'Annunzio and Toscanini; from Catalonia, Dali and Miro; from Andalusia, Picasso and Lorca; from Finland, Sibelius; from Denmark, but a long time ago, Kierkegaard; from Norway, Ibsen; and Sweden, Strindberg; from Switzerland, Klee and Corbusier; from Holland, Van Gogh; from Belgium, Maeterlinck.

But our map is still ragged and vacant; true, a map of the Americas would be much emptier, but the countries of Europe seem not to produce more than one genius, at the most two or three. And then we come to France. Here we find such an astounding collection of great painters and writers in the last fifty years, as well as scientists like Curie, and philosophers like Bergson, and half a dozen migrants from the list just given, that our map fills up at once and we feel like elephant hunters who have been stalking a solitary animal and who suddenly discover, browsing by their favourite river, the majestic herd. And here for the moment we will leave them, to approach them by a long way round, down the centuries.

★ ★ ★

Let us now compare two pieces of prose.

Here is the first.

'Not until you have been away from it do you realize how friendly, how beautiful is the meanest English town. Not the most magnificent scenery, misty mountains, raging seas, desert sunsets, or groves of orange can compensate for the loss of the Corn Exchange, the doctor's house, tennis in suburban gardens, the bank and the bank manager's house, the rural garages, the arid municipal park, the church clock and the jubilee drinking fountain. Even a town like Wolverhampton looks splendid through memory's telescope, while tears of homesickness blur the focus of Blandford's market square and the grey, shut-in climb of Bodmin's main street. Sitting here, remembering the provincial towns of England, I wonder why it is that they hold me, as they do thousands of my countrymen, with a spell that not all their obvious faults can break. Why is it that they are so attractive?'

And the second.

'I am approaching a little town, and I am already on a hill from

where I can see it. It lies half-way down; a stream bathes its walls on its way to flow through some lovely meadows, a thick wood shelters it from cold winds and the north. I see it on such a beautiful day that I can count its towers and church spires; it looks as if it were painted on to the side of the hill, and I am tempted to cry out and say "What happiness to live under such a fair sky and in such a charming place". I go down into the town, where I haven't stayed two nights before I am like the people who live there, and long to get away.

"There is something which has never been seen yet, and which, to all appearances, never will be, and that is a little town which isn't divided into cliques, where the families are united, and the cousins trust each other; where a marriage doesn't start a civil war, and where quarrels about precedence don't arise every time that a service, a ceremony, a procession or a funeral are held; where gossip and lying and malice have been outlawed, where the Landlord and the Corporation are on speaking terms, or the Ratepayers and their Assessors; where the Dean is friendly with the canons, and the canons don't despise the chaplains, and the chaplains tolerate the men in the choir.'

The first piece is from John Betjeman's *English Cities and Small Towns*, Collins, 1943. The second from the *Caractères* of La Bruyère, first published in 1687. The keynote of the first piece is romantic nostalgia, 'tears of homesickness' for places which the author is quite willing to admit are ruined or hideous, and of which he gives a detailed description in the hope that accuracy will lend them charm. The keynote of the second is a sense of reality—a classical vagueness of detail about the picture, but a complete refusal to be taken in by it; the eye observes the little town of Richelieu, and is delighted with it, but immediately the intellect starts to operate, and says NO. In these two passages (and many other examples could have been chosen) it seems to me that we see the difference between the culture of the two countries, the characteristic of English literature being Imagination, of the French, Intellect; the vice of the one Unreality, and of the other Sterility, and both requiring the intervention of each other's influences, the interplay of each other's masterpieces so that the luxuriance of the Anglo-Saxon intermingles with the lucidity of the Gallo-Latin, and both are fortified.

Here we should say at once that in all literatures there is room for everything; that France has produced its quota of inspired madmen, and England its natural Parisians, like Hume or Horace Walpole. It is absurd to generalize—all we can say is that Anglo-French culture exists, that Byron and Constable have intoxicated Paris, as Voltaire and Rousseau have shaken London, but that, if we are to understand what Anglo-French cultural relations are going to mean, we must try to isolate the particular element with which French culture has enriched us, and which we cannot do without, and pine for when deprived of it; and this I would identify as the sense of intellectual reality.

We can trace this sense through all the French masterpieces, from Villon to the Surrealists, but if I were to arrange a row of busts around a library and crown them with sacred myrtle, I would begin with Montaigne. This great writer, whom Shakespeare studied, grows in stature in times like ours, because as we taste something of the passion and bitterness and fear and tyranny of ideological wars, so we come more to appreciate the courage and deep, robust, clear-headed gaiety with which Montaigne, 'sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall', proclaimed his dangerous creed of tolerance, scepticism, and self-respect. This creed was not just a sprawling egotism, as the lazy mediocrity of his imitators might lead us to imagine, but a heroic affirmation of humanism at a time when his country was racked with civil war and religious persecution. 'The public good requires us to betray, and to lie, and to massacre,' he writes, 'let us resign this commission to those who are more pliable, and more obedient.' While as to his egotism he says, 'The worst of my actions do not seem as ugly to me as it would seem ugly and cowardly not to confess them', and I know no finer expression of the Renaissance sentiment of human dignity than his recommendation that we should live a quiet and unpretentious life on the grounds that the whole of moral philosophy can be in the reach of an ordinary existence, because '*chaque homme en soi porte la forme entière de l'humaine condition*'—this is his real philosophy, which he sums up in his unforgettable final paragraph, when he says that the absolute and as if divine perfection is to know how fully to realize our nature, to '*jouir loyalement de son être*'.

If Montaigne is a man in the prime of life sitting in his study

on a warm morning and putting down the sum of his experience in his rich, sinewy prose, then Pascal is that same man lying awake in the small hours of the night when death seems very close, and every thought is heightened by the apprehension that it may be his last. We live in an age of such terror and despair that it is only those whose emotional experiences have been as tragic and as despairing who are our real contemporaries, and when we come in our reading upon some room with the blinds down where a man is in agony, we know that we are at home. 'Let us imagine a number of men in chains, and all condemned to death, and some of these men having their throats cut every day in the sight of the others, and those who remain recognizing their own condition in those of their companions, and, as they wait their turn, staring at each other with anguish and without hope. Such is the picture of the condition of man.' That sentence of Pascal's, so clear and so rapid, so desperately true of Europe today, and containing as it were a whole school of modern realism, crystallizes that heroism of the imagination which is the mark of genius.

I have already mentioned La Bruyère, but I would like to say again that he seems to me to possess all the virtues of the French outlook, that sense of formal perfection allied to a passionate love of truth, that profound melancholy, surprising insight which we glimpse in La Fontaine, and find perhaps rather overdone in La Rochefoucauld, and which is the reward of exploring the human heart without bitterness and without fear. There is no time to seek for it in all the great names of the seventeenth century, though I should like to point out, in case I seem to be over-valuing French literature, that a visitor to Paris in 1650 could meet then, and in all but three cases, for the next thirty years, the following group of people: Descartes, Corneille, Pascal, the Cardinal de Retz, La Rochefoucauld, Mme de Lafayette, Madame de Sévigné, Molière, Racine, Boileau, La Fontaine, Bossuet, La Bruyère and Saint-Evremond.

When we reach the eighteenth century we find a certain optimism comes to be mixed with that sense of reality whose course we are tracing; to the sombre and exquisite writers of the seventeenth century succeed the long-lived philosophers, of whom Saint-Evremond, Master of the Duck Island in St. James's Park, was the precursor. It is the age of Voltaire, Diderot, Fontenelle, Montesquieu, Buffon, Saint-Simon and Rousseau. A taint of

journalism and Brains Trust uplift affects some of these writers, but nevertheless two, Voltaire and Rousseau, are outstanding. Voltaire's genius wells up in a perpetual radiant fountain of inspired good sense. He may not, perhaps, have been the most intelligent man who has ever lived, but certainly he is the one in whom intelligence has most combined with vitality; his mind moves in everlasting daylight. The courage of the seventeenth-century moralists lay in their awareness of the tragedy of *La Condition Humaine*, but the courage of Voltaire went, not into analysis of the tragedy, but into the building up of an aggressive, rich, active life in the service of reason; he was a mental man of action and decided to behave as if the tragedy were not there. He is of all French writers the best tonic against intellectual defeatism, against the lion under the bed, and his gayest and cruellest laughter is directed against the errors and fallacies and bogies that have now returned to plague us, and which it can still help to drive away. 'O divine Voltaire, ora pro nobis,' Frederick the Great used to say, and his prayer should be inscribed on the doors of all who persecute out of stupidity and fear, or love of power and superstition.

It is one of the advantages of living now that we can make a synthesis out of Voltaire and Rousseau, that when the glare of Voltaire's reason gets in our eyes, we can retire to the other's contemplative shade. This shade is seen to perfection in the *Confessions*, and in the *Rêveries d'un Promeneur Solitaire*. The fifth of these is a description of his life botanizing on the uninhabited island of Saint-Pierre on the Lake of Neuchâtel, and it is, I think, the purest, as it is almost the earliest, statement of that absolute and mystical love of Nature, that union through contemplation which Wordsworth was to develop fifty years later, and which has remained one of the most valid spiritual experiences available for us.

When we reach the nineteenth century (with Stendhal and Chateaubriand providing the transition) we find the moral realism of the French genius applied to a new problem and one for which no solution has been found. Whatever the earlier writers felt about the human situation, they saw it in its relationship to the inhuman world; it was not till the middle of the nineteenth century that the monstrous way of living that mankind had made for itself out of the industrial revolution became a problem, that De Quincey cursed stony-hearted

Oxford Street, and Baudelaire and Nerval wrestled with, and were defeated by, the wasting disease of large cities. So much has this infection spread that in our day we have seen the spirit of angry futile urban boredom, the vicious emptiness of slums and suburbs take shape in widening circles of death and destruction, because the few who invented the machines have not provided a life with true values for the masses whom the machines have begotten. To meet such an emergency Baudelaire flung his powers against the city, and was destroyed, leaving his terrible diary of the battle, and his sheaf of poems, which are still uniquely modern because they go so far to analyse the peculiar misery of living in large towns, with no Rousseau's island to retire to, with no spiritual values, only work, drink, and sex, and their excesses to animate the industrial scene. It was Madame du Deffand, in the eighteenth century, who called boredom the tapeworm which devoured everything, but it was Baudelaire who realized that this boredom was contagious, and that it arose from a spiritual vacuum, a consciousness of wasted potentialities, before in his turn he was devoured.

So far I have only spoken of such of the French who have a definite message for English writers, and by mentioning few poets and dramatists or novelists I have inferred that in these fields we need no help; that Dryden and Swift, Pope and Johnson, and the Romantics are able to look after themselves. But when we compare the nineteenth century in the two countries the situation is different. In spite of all the scientific and philosophic achievements of the Victorian age, it stands condemned of Unreality in the world of art. It had its poets and novelists, and they were born into their world with a wealth of talent, but they suffered from a worse disease than boredom, that of complacency. They flinched from poverty and unpopularity, from the tragic implication and the dangerous thought. They ran away from the city terror, and the fearful human enigma, to cling to the folds of their stupid, cosy Victorian Nanny, the Upper Middle Class. Flaubert and Baudelaire, giants of prose and poetry, were contemporaries of Matthew Arnold; they were some ten years younger than Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson and Browning, as Hugo and Balzac were some ten years older. When we compare Balzac and Flaubert to Dickens and Thackeray, Baudelaire to Tennyson, Sainte-Beuve to Hazlitt, we must lower our eyes. There is nothing to say; the

Frenchmen are adults: beside them, the English, for all their natural advantages, have not grown up.¹

A few years later the French produce Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarmé. Against the by now even more impregnable fortress of materialist urban civilization the boy genius of Rimbaud flings itself, as some half-naked young savage, greased with magic charms, would hurl himself with a wild cry against the frontier machine-guns, and fall dead under the concrete fortress of the Bourgeoisie. And in all this long nineteenth- and twentieth-century struggle between the poetic French realism which seeks for spiritual values and the obdurate philistine materialism of bourgeois society what part did we play? We buried Byron and Shelley, and let Wordsworth bury himself, we helped the great Victorians to become peers and clubmen, and handsomely rewarded our artists with the pension of respectability; some of them may have pined and grumbled, while others even were too stupid to know that a battle was on and that they had run away. We had, of course, Hopkins, and Butler, and Pater hinting at heresy in an Oxford common room, and Swinburne, Doughty, and poor Wilde, to whom we taught Degeneration through Suffering. But we stood aside from the conflict, with the result that in the twentieth century our art and literature became even more unreal: the fanciful pastime of well-to-do middle-aged children who had refused to grow up, and who could never hurt themselves because whenever they fell it was always on a thick green lawn. I think, in fact, that around 1900 to 1910 art and literature in this country were in a fair way to vanish, and depended on a very few people, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Bridges, Moore, Yeats and the Bloomsbury group, who were just beginning to save them from extinction. In the twenties and the thirties we have paid for this.

And now we have stalked up behind the herd of great Frenchmen and come upon the moderns, who belonged to their age, upon the

¹I owe this observation to an essay of Mr. F. L. Lucas. Spoken in a Georgian house in Edinburgh, it sounded almost blasphemous, and the angry bearded ghosts of Browning, Tennyson, Arnold, Carlyle, and Ruskin seemed to rise to reproach me. 'How could you!' Yet this was the city where, in the name of infant Victorianism, Jeffrey and North had mauled the Romantics and Tennyson. One should say rather that Browning, Arnold, and Tennyson all made some contribution to the battle, but refused to die in it. Their contemporaries in France faced facts longer, and took their punishment.

writers who were never satisfied: Mallarmé, Proust, Valéry, Gide, Claudel; upon the innovators: Apollinaire, Cocteau, Aragon, Eluard, Malraux, and upon those great living artists who inherit from Cézanne, Rénoir, Degas: Bonnard, Rouault, Maillol, Dufy, Picasso, Braque, Matisse.

How can they help us, and how, if at all, can we be of use to them?

Firstly, we can make their books more accessible. We can publish more translations, and reprint more originals; we can have an *Edition des Introuvables*, we can bring authors who are only names, Germain Nouveau, Tristan Corbière, René Ghil, Laurent Tailhade, Albert Jarry, that fine poet Guillaume Apollinaire,¹ before our public; those living writers of whom we know so little, Aragon, Eluard, Jouve, Jouhandeau, Fargue, Peret, Sartre, and strange new poets like Patrice de la Tour du Pin. Since 1940 a French literary monthly called *Fontaine* has been published in Algiers. I do not know anyone in England who has seen a single copy. And the classics are unprocurable, as any of us know who have sought a Rimbaud, a copy of Flaubert's Letters, or the Goncourt Journals. Then we can try to import one or two Frenchmen. I think at the present moment that it is not unfair to say that among all the French serving in this country there is not a single writer or painter who would qualify for the first rank at home. America has received many, and needs them certainly as much as we do, but if the talent of Europe is going to seep slowly away across the Atlantic, as has been the trend for the last few years, then each one of us will be the loser. We must make an England which gives a welcome to artists, and is not a country to be by-passed by the European talent on its way to the U.S.A. A beginning can be made now. Aragon, whose war poems, in French, have just sold three thousand copies in this country, is reputed to be in Switzerland; wherever he is he is in danger; let us fetch him out. Eluard also has published some new

¹Every June, since 1940, I am haunted by a verse of Apollinaire's which returns like hay-fever, and which I first read in that hot, implacable sunshine in which Paris fell.

Juin, ton soleil, ardente lyre,
 Brûle mes doigts endoloris,
 Triste et mélodieux délire
 J'erre à travers mon beau Paris
 Sans avoir le cœur d'y mourir

patriotic poems in Paris, which will be soon available. He and his family should be rescued. Malraux would be invaluable; and Valéry. And in Tunis we have come upon our greatest prize, that old nugget of radio-active cerebration, M. André Gide, who wrote in 1941, in the German controlled *Nouvelle Revue Française*, 'Every time I dip into English literature again, it is with delight. What variety! What abundance! This is the literature whose disappearance will most impoverish humanity.' I would like to feel that he is going to be rewarded.

But it is after the war that the opportunity to benefit from French Culture will arise. Whatever may be the political relationship between England and France, and I am certain it will be very close (for it is through alliance with France that England can be united with Europe again, and Europe a great power), I hope their cultural relationship will be one of absolute union. The future of Europe will belong to intellectuals, because it must belong to them. For intellectuals are the only group in society who are fundamentally international. Everyone who believes in the intellect takes his place in the great family tree of the human intelligence in which those who have influenced him are his real ancestors, and these ancestors are from every race, every creed, and every condition. I am all for regionalism, for decentralization, for the 'goût du terroir' in our artists, but I think that nationalism, though it has proved the soundest and deepest instinct in this war, and is beyond praise as a sentiment when our country is in danger, is not one of the most forward-looking of human creeds. It has won wars, but it has also made them, and it is to that love of truth which unites artists and scientists, that common belief in virtue and reason, that we must look for the perpetuation of peace and the prevention of wars to come.

So far we have attempted no explanation for the presence in France of so many great writers and painters. I think it is largely due to its climate, or rather its combination of climates, Atlantic, Continental and Mediterranean, and to its central position as a market for ideas; but I think it is also because in no other country is Art so highly considered, and artists left so benevolently alone. An English artist is always conscious of responsibilities—to his family, to his tutors, to his public, to society and to the State. We have produced the greatest poets, but somehow in spite of ourselves. That is why France must remain a place where

everyone can go, and where everyone can, if he wishes, live, and live without guilt and without a feeling of expatriation. The great blessing France confers on the artist is anonymity. When an English writer goes there the layers of his social personality peel off one by one, he finds there are more and more things he can do without, and more and more he comes to be, pre-occupied with his central situation, his creative possibilities. For in France he is not an ordinary nobody. This nobody, who leaves behind his old social or academic skin, is offered all that is most rare and delightful in life: masterpieces of painting and architecture, natural beauty, congenial climate, cheap food, good wine, a room to write in, a café to talk in, and a well-wishing atmosphere in which everything is simplified. For the painter there is outdoor light at all seasons and the world's centre for pictures. For the writer health and constant exhilaration. He has the Mediterranean for a sun-lamp, and Paris as his oxygen-tent. I don't think any writer can live in France without acquiring something of that serious and lucid power which we have been discussing, and lacking which, so much English work is a salad without a dressing, a nostalgic left-over from the Victorian age.

I know in my own case how much the thought sustains me of my first visit to France after the war, so that I can be decontaminated from all the newspapers I have read, the unnecessary people I have met, the stupid things I have said and woolly opinions I have held. I shall land at Bordeaux or La Rochelle and go first to the valley of the Dordogne, that beautiful temperate Romanesque corner of France where Montaigne came from, where the countryside is Virgilian and white oxen move about the maize-fields, and where, in the oakwoods above, the edible truffle mysteriously propagates itself, a connoisseur of geese and men. From there I will make my way over the Massif Central, across the heather and granite of the Margeride, and over the pine-forests and volcanic cones of the high plateau of the Vivarais, to that extraordinary road which descends, by a little stream marked in huge letters, Ardèche, to the Rhone valley. Thence I shall take the Route Nationale Sept, unwinding like a black liquorice stick through the plane trees, to Aix en Provence, and then branch off over the Maures, through the chestnut forests and the cork woods, till I reach the sea by Saint Tropez. There I shall lie on the beach without moving for several months, like a lump of

driftwood, until I have regained what Rousseau called the 'sensation of existence stripped of every other feeling which is in itself a precious sense of contentment and peace', and without which we cannot develop the best that is in us, and then, when the cicadas are silent and the nights turn cold, it will be time to think of Paris.

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Man evolves through a perpetual spiritual conflict whose issues vary but in which at any given time the artist must take part. The sixteenth century established the individual's right to his personality, the seventeenth the dignity of that personality in relation to society, and its tragic destiny. The eighteenth century saw the struggle for liberty and the life of reason, for freedom from persecution and fear, the nineteenth for man's right, in spite of having bound himself in his own chains of ugliness and hate, to beauty and love. All these struggles still continue; but if the intellectuals of the twentieth century can obtain an armistice, then the greatest struggle, the struggle to understand the nature of life, and of our fate which the new sciences, physics, biology and psychology are attempting, and where the artist can help by dropping his depth-charges, may become the preoccupation of all the intellectuals of Europe, and grow a little nearer to being solved. England must provide the security which alone can help the patient, passionate, inquiring genius of our tiny continent to create and soar.

I would like to end with one more dark saying of Gide's, which he published in Paris in 1940,¹ a definition which is highly subversive were it not so unlikely ever to apply to us:

'Our literature is being incriminated these days. People are reproaching it for its refinement and for having worked to weaken rather than galvanize our energies. Would it not be wiser to realize that every advanced literature, whatever its character, tends to exhaust what produces it? This flower of civilization develops and opens at the expense of the plant, which surrenders, gives, sacrifices itself to the flower. If Germany were in richer bloom, she would have been less strong.'

¹ Quoted from the current number of *Parisian Review*.

VIOLET TREFUSIS

THE CARILLON¹

THE old Duchess had died at last, without a taunt, without vindictiveness, without even so much as the departing gibe that was expected of her. This, it was felt, would be shortly rectified by a loyal member of the family brought up in the tradition of her cynicism, her sardonic sallies that were solicited and dreaded all over Europe, when she was in her prime.

A great change had come over her during the last few days. She would sit for hours in her uncomfortable chair by the window, quite silent, drumming on the arm with her fingers; her expression signified: 'How dared Death keep her waiting?'

At the sound of the sentry's heavy footsteps crushing the gravel beneath her window, she had been heard to mutter more than once: 'Celui-là, au moins, est exact!' It was taken to mean that the sentry, at least, had a notion of punctuality.

Rigid, frigid, she sat, drumming on the arm of her chair. A wood fire—the only one that was allowed in the bedrooms—gave out its rich resinous smell, reminiscent of past 'battues' in orthodox autumns, when the more sporting members of Middle-European Embassies were invited to shoot. Even the German Ambassador—the Ermenonvilles had many German connections—had not been excluded. Several people had refused to meet him; it was not long after that little war of 1914, but Hedwige, whose distant cousin he was, had been obdurate. She prided herself on being a 'European', and had, in those days, nothing but contempt for her 'provincial' French relations. One of her sons, Philippe, had been obediently polite, the other, Anne-Jules, 'carrément grossier', offensive, baiting the Ambassador whenever possible, making fun of his little green hat with the 'Gamsbart'.

Stubborn, irresistible, Anne-Jules! Well, he was gone for good now, gone to join General de Gaulle, about whom, apart from the fact that he was brave and incorruptible, one knew little; one would have liked to know more. Fat Philippe, whose obedience had become obsequiousness, was downstairs now, coquetting, no doubt, with the German Colonel; trying to

¹This story takes place in the winter of 1940.

wheedle a little petrol out of him, or a little butter. Ach, pfui! The Duchess's long upper lip curled in disgust. She really hated Philippe, his fat pasty face, his blond hair, like damp feathers.

She thought: I may as well go through the list of people I despise, I may not be here to-morrow. Well, there's Phillippe. Et d'un. Then there's my nephew Charles-Henri, so small, wizened, dyspeptic, with little hands like claws. He's clever, crafty, avaricious: Louis XI young. I wish I had'nt told him where my jewels are buried. Et de deux. . . . These were the two principal caryatids supporting her hatred, but there were lesser loathings, such as her unmarried niece, Elisabeth, aptly nicknamed Bébête, for example, who shared, with other virgins, the conviction that she was a 'born' nurse-cum-missionary. She insisted on nursing Tante Hedwige, insisted on being the chief butt of her barbed wit. With appalling competence, she took temperatures, gave piques, made beds. There was nothing she could reproach her with except that she was a bore. Tante Hedwige had tired herself out at Bébête's expense. That was why, for the last few days, she had sat, mutely malignant, at her bedroom window, being got up and put to bed by the terrified Bébête, who would positively have welcomed a return to her waspishness.

Hedwige had made up her mind not to die in her bed, whatever happened. It gave more trouble, and she was determined to give trouble to the bitter end. Queen Elizabeth had refused to go to bed: she created an excellent precedent. Hedwige could quote Queen Elizabeth.

A Buhl clock on the mantelpiece, one of the few that had not been purloined by Colonel von Kleinstadt, appeared to yawn, before distilling four drops of tedium. It was a blasé clock, blasé about Death, blasé about wars; it had seen too many.

The Duchess interrupted her drumming for a minute to rest her domed, doomed family forehead on a puffy white hand embossed with thick blue veins. She looked out of the window at the park with its avenue similar to a perfect parting culminating in a tonsure, which, in point of fact was a rond-point; in the middle was dumped a huge group representing the Rape of the Sabines: a masterpiece of Italianate inspiration. In spite of lack of gardeners, not a tree—I had nearly said not a hair—was out of place. The avenue itself was green with weeds. (Colonel

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von Kleinstadt respected trees, it was the one thing he did respect.) She thought: presently they will swarm up the avenue, little back termites coming to my funeral: sisters, cousins once and twice removed, nephews and nieces. How will they get here, I wonder? There isn't a car between the lot of them; of course there are the old family carriages to be drawn by farm-horses; and some of the younger ones have bicycles; they will flock from all over the country. It will be an occasion. Let us not forget I was once a 'tante à heritage!' But she knew in her heart of hearts that she represented more than that. She was the wife of the Head of the Family, and one must have lived long in France to realize the full portentousness of this status, comparable only in a lesser degree to that of the Almighty. The Papal Bull, The Imperial Ukase, lettre de cachet, was not more dreaded than the veto of the chef de famille. A totally déclassé scion of a considerable house can live in clover if protected by its head. This was the case with Gilles de Tençin, a bad lot if ever there was one. Supported by avuncular indulgence, even 'le Jockey' had been compelled to accept him. Gilles had nothing to fear from anyone, except jealousy. Tante Hedwige, in her way, was even more formidable than l'oncle Antoine. It was no exaggeration to say that Colonel von Kleinstadt, in spite of all his bravado, quailed before the Duchess, who spoke perfect German, whenever she deigned to speak at all, and who, more often than not, appeared unaware of his presence.

Colonel von Kleinstadt could not forget that her grandmother had been a Schönborn and that *his* grandmother had kept a hotel in Wiesbaden; it was difficult for him to fight down this feeling of inferiority.

How pleased 'der Kleine' will be when I am gone, brooded Hedwige. How he will bully the others, and try to intimidate Marc-Antoine! (Marc-Antoine was her husband.) To think that she had once liked the Germans, and had been so happy as a little girl with her mother at Baden Baden. O well . . . that was long ago! She suddenly saw the cosy sitting-room, its shiny chintzes, innumerable signed photographs of Royalties, Paisley shawls, optimistic disorder. She shivered . . .

Her beautiful moth-pale room, with its dry bony boiseries, seemed in urgent need of a blood-transfusion; the ceiling was so high, the walls so narrow, it was surely an ideal setting for a

consumptive's death-bed; but she was not dying of consumption, she was dying of rage, of humiliation, of despair, and frustration; also, incidentally, of the hereditary tumour, that had almost acquired an heraldic significance. It should have figured in her coat of arms.

A knock. Expecting it to be Bébête, Hedwige did not answer. It was repeated. Bébête would not dare to knock twice. 'Entrez,' she grunted. A small, square woman, with a head resembling a coco-nut covered with sparse red hair, came in and stood with authority in front of Hedwige. She had a white, clownish face designed for hilarity, and looked as useful as a jug.

'*She's* out, so I thought I'd look in'; at the word '*she*', the visitor jerked her thumb towards the door.

The Duchess grinned the grin of an accomplice: 'I wish *she'd* stay out, Suzanne, but I shall escape her all the same! Quite soon, now'; she leered up at Suzanne, whose eyes filled with tears. 'What nonsense,' her old maid said gruffly, 'Madame la Duchesse will outlive us all.' 'Madame la Duchesse doesn't want to, Madame la Duchesse has seen quite enough of "*cette chienne de vie*"! Don't cry, Suzanne, you look so hideous when you cry.' 'If only I could have nursed Madame la Duchesse,' the woman suddenly bawled, throwing all pretence of not crying to the winds, 'you wouldn't be where you are now.' 'There, there,' croaked Hedwige, extending a would-be comforting hand. 'Don't cry. Remember you will have to sustain the whole household when I am gone. Ces sales Boches . . .' She choked, 'I can't talk any more. Va, mon petit.' Her face softened. It was suddenly possible to see that she had been good-looking, in a rather stilted, Largillière way. Suzanne grabbed her hand, kissed it, and shuffled out, still sobbing.

Hedwige fell back exhausted. She knew that she had made her last conversational effort.

High up, in the clock-tower, the carillon imported by a Belgian great-aunt pronounced its formal chimes; punctual, ritualistic, as a figure in a Court quadrille. The mincing, high-heeled sounds, now advancing, now retreating, made elegant patterns in the silence. In Summer, bats wheeled about the carillon, zig-zagging round the moon and the weathercock. How nice to be so out of reach, so invulnerable, thought Hedwige. Immediately, as though in mockery, a lurid pain, a

sort of forked-lightning of a pain, tore through her, leaving her blighted and breathless.

This must be the end; she prayed it might be the end; she wanted to escape all the pious paraphernalia. She had had it out with her Maker long ago; they had had a not unfriendly wrangle.

Look out! It's coming again! She could feel It gathering up Its strength; sweat broke out on her forehead; on the hands that clutched the arms of the chair, the veins stood out like blue worms. Ah! Pity! Have pity! An inarticulate cry broke from her. Bébête came running in. . .

The family was determined not to be done out of its last treat, the only sort of treat it could permit itself nowadays: a family funeral! Drawers and cupboards offered up their ready, their abundant, their willing mourning. Ubiquitous, it volunteered from all sides. It was lovely and warm, and richly black—not that most members of the family were not in black already—but there are degrees of blackness, of *crêpiness*, of *creepiness*; those who have not attended a French funeral simply do not know what mourning is. It is conical, starting from the head, spreading out over the bust and shoulders, bust and hips, it is converse, opaque, oriental, enveloping its wearer in a sort of meat-safe, the meshes of which are so close, that it is idle to speculate on its contents. It is unnecessary, for Convention's sake, to weep behind the meat-safe, you could do almost anything behind it without risk of detection. The family cones stand in an inflexible row in front of the vestry. You shake hands with each, a black kid or woollen paw shoots out at you, you gabble something and pass on to the next. It is quite impossible to identify the features behind each *crêpe* cascade, but you take it for granted that the first figure is the widow, the second the mother, the third the daughter, etc., according to unalterable protocol.

Hedwige's funeral was of the most enjoyable variety. It gave one an unrivalled opportunity of seeing a great many relations, who would, after all, not have been able to go to Paris, had she been buried there, for they could not have obtained permits, and the expense would have been too great. It was amusing to note the degree of decrepitude attained by persons not seen for years, to speculate on the matrimonial prospects of 'la petite

une telle'; in short, to forget even the Army of Occupation in zealous family probings.

One after another, the black visitors drove, walked, or bicycled to the château. There was only one car, an electric brougham. In it sat an old lady with a face like a frost-bitten crab-apple. She had to be lifted out of the brougham, but hopped eagerly up the steps on crutches. She had always known she would outlive Hedwige; cripples outlive everyone.

Charles-Henri, head of the 'younger branch', arrived first, naturally. His small figure, to which even the best English tailors had failed to impart an air of virility, bustled hither and thither, suggesting, contriving.

Suzanne and Marie-Louise, the Duchess's widowed niece, watched him from the top of the State staircase. 'He looks like an earwig,' remarked Marie-Louise in her indolent contralto, which made every word seem an effort; *she* was hardly in mourning at all, that is to say, she was dressed in her customary shabby black, scandalously devoid of crêpe, considering she was a war-widow. She was a niece of Hedwige's, and had insisted on making a love-match. ('Deux ans d'amour, et toute une vie de bout de table' had been the Family's verdict.)

René had been killed in the break-through at Sedan, when she was on the point of having a third child they could ill afford. She now led the life of a farmer, on the small farm she had been privileged to retain, the two elder children running errands, and looking like ragamuffins with their unkempt hair and sabots. Curiously enough, Hedwige had liked and understood her. They had split a bottle of champagne over René's Croix de Guerre.

Marie-Louise nudged Suzanne: 'Look at them; regarde-les-donc, that old vulture, la cousine Berthe, alighting on the refuse-heap! And Cousin Gabrielle with her crutches, and Bébête being important and describing the Last Moments, and Philippe rushing away and asking the Kleinstadt's advice—Pah! They make me sick! I feel as though I'd turned over a stone concealing dozens of unmentionable insects, black and scurrying!' 'You exaggerate, Mlle Marie-Louise,' sniffed the poor old maid, who could never bring herself to call Marie-Louise 'Madame'. She had cried herself into a farcical resemblance to one of the Fratellini brothers, with her dead-white face and her tuft of red hair.

'They're not as bad as you make out. After all, it hasn't been easy to get here, all those miles on bicycles, and open dogcarts in this piercing cold.'

'Rubbish! They wouldn't have missed it for worlds, they look upon this as a sort of macabre party, "le dernier salon où l'on cause". If only Anne-Jules could see them! Thank God, he's been spared this, it's grand to think *he's* not disarmed, celui-là, that he has retained all his teeth and claws, how I wish I could hear from him!' 'To think, Mademoiselle, that we used to turn on the English news every night, Madame la Duchesse and I, and that we used to sit on the floor with our ears glued to the wireless, and that——' Marie-Louise suddenly gripped Suzanne's arm: 'Look, I *knew* he'd come, the black sheep, who lost his arm in the last war where René won his Croix de Guerre in this one!' 'Mais, qui donc, Mademoiselle?' 'But Gilles de Tençin, of course, look; there he is, shaking hands with l'oncle Marc-Antoine. I will say that for Marc-Antoine, he's always stuck up for Gilles, besides, Marc-Antoine isn't rotten, he's a good sort, au fond; laziness is *his* besetting sin . . .!' Together they peered down over the wrought-iron balustrade, with its intricate monogram woven around the ducal coronet like a spider in its web.

In the echoing hall below, the black termites accumulated, greeted sometimes by the widower, more often by the officious Charles-Henri. Condolences were muttered, hands lengthily pressed in a way which was meant to convey sympathy. People who wanted to view the corpse started to mount the stairs. Marie-Louise dragged Suzanne away. 'Come: I've seen enough of these ghouls.' She made for the room which she had not occupied since her marriage. Once there, she tossed off her shabby black hat, threw herself on the narrow bed draped in toile de Jouy. Without her hat, she looked years younger, exuberent curly hair sprang up like bracken after a foot has passed.

Marie-Louise had never been soignée, but she had been pretty in a sort of luscious eighteenth-century way. Suzanne, full of commiseration, looked down on the mutinous head, red chapped hands, and darned stockings. 'I suppose', she said haltingly, 'you could find no use for me?'

The funeral was a success. The coffin under its black velvet pall, embroidered with the Ermenonville coat of arms, had

been dutifully sprinkled with Holy Water by each member of the family in turn.

Père Anselme had preached an eulogistic, nay, in some people's opinion, fulsome oration, on the defunct Duchess. But was it not tactless to allude in such lengthy terms to the absent Anne-Jules? Even Marc-Antoine, in his great Louis XIII arm chair, had fidgeted a little. He knew that Colonel von Kleinstadt was listening to every word the priest said.

Marie-Louise thought, looking at the family circle: They are like Boilly's caricatures, each representing a vice, all grouped together in a terrifying bunch of grimacing faces. Charles-Henri, is Avarice; Philippe, Duplicity; Camille, Slander; Marc-Antoine, Sloth; Gilles, poor pet, Self-Indulgence, and so on! Which really cared for Hedwige? Marc-Antoine, in his lethargic way, I suppose; it was less trouble to be dominated. Philippe was always terrified of her; Bébête, however, is shedding perfectly genuine tears—a born victim. Those irrepressible, uncamouflaged sobs proceed from Suzanne. It is impossible to tell what is going on behind the veils of Tante Aldegonde, Tante Mélanie, and Tante Camille. Tante Aldegonde is the only one who wasn't jealous of her. As for the younger generation, they have all grown out of their clothes, not that that is their fault. Socks don't go with embryonic moustaches, and why have they all got such prominent behinds? We *are* a plain family. Gilles, of course, *was* good-looking in a mountainous way when he was young, but not a patch on my Réné. I shall never look at any man again, I shall never love him any less. Thank God, Armand takes after his father: I shall love him till I die.

It was agreed by everyone that the dinner had been a tour de force. After all, it was not easy, especially with the Germans on the premises, nosing about everywhere.

Charles-Henri had had an extremely ingenious idea; the usual meagre fare, supplemented by a few dejected-looking sandwiches, was laid out on the usual table, 'contributions' from those members of the family who owned farms, were placed in the drawers on each side of the table. It was the affair of a moment to pop the incriminating dishes into the drawers. All the cooking had been done 'outside'; no succulent smells had titillated the nostrils of lounging German soldiers.

The dinner was unorthodox, but compulsory. One could not ask elderly people to walk, drive or bicycle anything from 10 to 30 kilometres on a December night with a temperature of four degrees below zero. Finding beds for them was more difficult. Most of the beds had been requisitioned by 'les occupants', but they had overlooked quite a number of old mattresses in the attics; these had been hauled down in the dead of night, and thrust under the remaining beds—somehow, they would manage.

Meanwhile, an unwonted flush suffused the cheeks of the remaining guests, who had mustered several venerable and unsuspected bottles. The last vestiges of scraggy duck or chicken had been carefully brushed into the drawers. Marc-Antoine had gone into the next room to confer with the curé.

The coast was clear. One could give tongue. The collective effect was rather that of Douanier Rousseau personages who had strayed into an eighteenth-century setting, so black they were, and angular, with mauve flushes on their high cheekbones. Charles-Henri had immediately occupied Marc-Antoine's recent chair, wishing to remind them that, although his uncle might be head of the older branch, he was head of the younger branch of the Ermenonville family. A cheap cigar jutted from his mean little lips; he was partial to cigars, they emphasized (so he thought) his virility. Tante Aldegonde, who in her youth had been one of Boldini's favourite sitters (all neck and instep), had managed to preserve a profile so fragile that it called for a glass case. She was unfortunately almost stone-deaf, and now entended a sinister little black box resembling a pocket Kodak in the direction of Charles-Henri. The other two sisters of the late Duchess, Tante Camille, hideous, spiteful, witty, Tante Mélanie with her Jeremiads, and her 'migraines', sat resentfully side by side; everybody was too afraid of Tante Camille, and too bored by Tante Mélanie, to find them desirable neighbours.

Bébête and Philippe, both voracious eaters, savouring a rare repletion, leant back in their chairs, uncritical and somnolent. Marie-Louise had scarcely spoken throughout the meal; she has already smoked four or five cigarettes, much to the indignation of her fellow-guests. Gilles' deep voice suddenly jarred on the company. 'Well, I'm sure we've all had a very jolly evening.' 'What a word to use,' snapped Charles-Henri, under present circumstances! 'Perhaps I should have added, *in spite of the*

circumstances,' corrected Gilles with dangerous docility, 'but which of us, if I may be permitted to ask, is really affected by Tante Hedwige's death?' 'I suppose you are drunk, as usual,' came the contemptuous retort. 'Oh, no,' sighed the tactless one, 'it would take more than two glasses of Burgundy to make *me* drunk. As a matter of fact, in spite of my unseemly remark'—he lifted his glass to the level of his eyes, holding it against the light, as though to test its quality—'I was really devoted to Hedwige, not . . .'—he put the glass down again—'not for what I could get out of her, as you suppose, but because she was a genuine person. Now, which of you is a genuine person?' His implacable eye roved from aunt to aunt. 'You, ma Tante Aldegonde, in a vague lunar way, are kind and disinterested. Tante Camille is also genuine—genuinely malicious, but never a bore. Tante Mélanie, on the contrary, is never malicious, but always——' 'Gilles, your behaviour is scandalous,' hissed Charles-Henri, 'kindly be quiet, or leave the room!' 'Since when,' drawled Gilles, 'have I taken orders from you? From l'oncle Marc, perhaps, but from you, never.' He again raised his glass to the light, adding as though to himself, 'He must have taken leave of his senses, poor little fellow.' Old Camille, secretly amused—she liked a scrap and admired Gilles—thought it time to intervene, 'Hold your tongues, both of you! And sit down, Charles-Henri, you are only making a fool of yourself.' 'Me, making a fool of myself?' spluttered the little man, white and shrill, 'Me! Surely you forget to whom you are speaking?' 'Tut-tut,' mocked the old lady, 'you don't impress *me*, my dear, you never have!'

Philippe roused himself sufficiently to say 'Surely, Tante Camille, this is hardly the moment to air one of our family quarrels? Just because you don't get on with Charles-Henri—'

Camille was enjoying herself. 'What I said was incorrect,' she rasped, with a devilish grin, 'You, as a matter of fact, are the exception. You get on with him, because you toady to him, in the same way as you toady to Colonel von Klein——.' 'What is she saying? Why are you all so angry?' The high, frosty tones of Tante Aldegonde suddenly dropped like icicles, like the carillon chimes, on the dinner-party. 'I wish I could hear what you are all talking about,' she complained, 'There, there,' soothed Bébête in her best hospital manner, 'Don't worry,

Tante Aldegonde, they're all a little over-excited.' Bewildered, Aldegonde, whose intelligence had never been her strong point, looked from one spiteful face to the other. 'I don't understand,' she sighed. Her glance lit on Marie-Louise, isolated behind her smoke-screen. 'Come here, ma petite,' she motioned to her niece, 'You seem to be as out of it as I am.' 'Oh, she's out of it right enough,' sneered Charles-Henri, 'We can go to the Devil for all she cares! So long as she can puff away at her beastly cigarettes, she's quite content. Why, she isn't even wearing proper mourning!' 'Yet she is entitled to deeper mourning than any of us, considering her husband was killed on the battlefield not seven months ago.' Gilles' voice was ominously quiet. They all instinctively glanced at his empty sleeve. 'I think, perhaps, if you had behaved as her husband behaved, the Boche wouldn't be living in this house now. I think, perhaps, you had better apologize to her, because,'—the voice suddenly thundered—'if you don't, I shall damn well make you!' At that, he leapt to his feet, everyone rose, chairs were pushed back, clattered to the ground. Philippe and Bébête rushed to Gilles, one to each side of him; with his single arm he shooed Philippe away. The white and panting Charles-Henri stood confronting him. 'It is beneath my dignity to strike a cripple'—'It is beneath *my* dignity to strike somebody who can only stand up to old women.' The single arm shot out, grasped Charles-Henri by the collar, shook him like a rat. 'Apologize, you little beast, apologize, or I'll shake you till your teeth drop out.' The enormous Gilles towered above him, Charles-Henri sagged like some invertebrate marionette: 'A-ll- right, I—will—if—only—you'll—let—GO!' The arm dropped its prey as suddenly as it had seized it. Charles-Henri tottered back, making the unconsciously plebeian gesture of wiping the sweat from his forehead. 'Say it, then, say it, or——' threatened Gilles. 'I—I—beg your pardon, Marie-Louise,—it—wasn't meant unkindly.' 'That'll do, now clear out, and don't let me see your face again this evening.' Only too pleased to do as he was told, to get away from the derisive or frightened faces, Charles-Henri slunk from the room. 'C'est bien fait,' cackled old Camille, feeling quite young again, 'he deserved what he got.'

Meanwhile, the cause of the trouble had lit another cigarette and was staring abstractedly into space. She wished she hadn't

come; the farm, with its boring, sometimes squalid routine, appeared to her as a haven of purity. She was grateful to Gilles in a way, but she would have preferred to remain the least conspicuous figure at this gathering; now she yearned to get home, to plunge once more into her tête-à-tête with her dead husband, to alternatively praise or scold her children, feed the hens, peel the potatoes. . . . Gilles was sitting beside her, dumb with pity; he held out his hand, which she pressed. . . . 'Merci,' was all she found to say.

Order was being restored to the tousled room, chairs were being drawn up, conversations started. Here and there a phrase caught her attention. 'It must be overlooked; remember, he has a weak digestion.' 'Of course, this house was always draughty.' 'I wonder where the jewels are buried?' 'Personally, I always thought it made Hedwige look years older to dye her hair.'

It was freezing hard. A twanging stillness had settled on the countryside. The stupid tramp of the sentry could not impinge on it; taut and creaseless, it awaited select sounds: the needle-like pricks of the carillon.

Tossing on her narrow bed, Marie-Louise was somehow comforted. The carillon was like the soul of France, icily aloof, impregnable, enduring.

CZESLAW POZNANSKI

BACK TO METTERNICH

In the interwar period, especially since the rise of Hitler to power, and still more since the Spanish war, the old Party divisions in the Western democracies lost part of their meaning. The most important division cut across Right and Left, across the Tory and the Labour Party. It was the division between the appeasers and the anti-appeasers.

In France Georges Mandel and Paul Reynaud found themselves on the same side of the barricade as Edouard Herriot and Leon Blum, while Paul Faure, Marcel Déat and the 'pacifist' leaders of the Teachers' Union sided with Laval, Flandin and the Comité des Forges.

Here in Great Britain Winston Churchill and a group of young Tories were prominent among the anti-appeasers, while old leaders of the Labour Party outchamberlained Neville Chamberlain. So George Lansbury guaranteed Hitler's peaceful intentions and J. R. Clynes could say in his *Memoirs*, published in 1938, that in 1936 after the re-occupation of the Rhineland, 'frustrated in what seems to have been a sincere effort towards a peaceful European agreement, Germany immediately began a rearmament programme to compete with ours'.¹

In France this rift was not healed by the war. It is the unholy alliance of 'appeasers' which engineered the French surrender in 1940 and started the collaborationist policy. In this country September 3, 1939, did toll the death knell for the appeasement policy and the unbending will to fight is unanimous.

The *psychology* of appeasement, however, is far from dead. In fact it has affected people who had been immune from it in pre-war days. The new appeasers are not only the *Times* and Professor Carr, but also G. D. H. Cole, President of the Fabian Society, A. J. Cummings, the *News Chronicle*, and so on.

What was in fact the political philosophy underlying the appeasement policy? It was the assumption that the only thing which mattered was to assure an understanding between the Great European Powers (at that moment Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy.) This understanding was considered to be the necessary and sufficient basis of peace, the only guarantee of a harmonious development of Europe. Therefore this understanding had to be arrived at at any cost, *even at the expense of smaller nations*. Appeasement was the extreme form of power-politics.

That was the idea expressed in the first draft of Mussolini's Four Power Pact, which in Article 1 stated that the Four Western Powers 's'engagent d'agir dans le domaine des relations européennes pour que la politique de paix soit adoptée en cas de nécessité par d'autres Etats' and proceeded immediately in Article 2 to speak of the revision of Peace Treaties, a revision which could only have been carried out at the expense of other European nations.

That was the sense of the climax of the appeasement policy when at Munich Neville Chamberlain was sincerely persuaded that he had bought 'peace in our time' at the trifling expense

¹The italics in all the quotations are mine.

of the Sudeten area, which did not belong to Great Britain, but to Czechoslovakia.

The political philosophy of the new adepts of power-politics is exactly the same. To them also peace means peace between the Great Powers, only to day these Great Powers are no longer Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy, but Great Britain, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and China. And they share with the old appeasers the complete disregard of smaller nations.

The essential thesis of the new school is most clearly expressed by G. D. H. Cole in the following words:

‘In the circumstances of today the only Nation State which can in truth possess the attributes of sovereign independence is the great State; and in the case of great States surrounded by smaller neighbours it is inevitable if State sovereignty is to remain the basis of political relationships that the great States should seek to engulf their neighbours, and the small States be kept alive, if at all, only when they are in position of buffers between the great.’

The new power-politicians consider it necessary and sufficient for the world peace that the Great Powers, who, as said above, are generally named Great Britain, U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and China (it will be seen later on why I use the cautious formula ‘generally named’) should arrive at an understanding as to their collaboration.

And to assure this collaboration they propose to divide Europe into a British and a Russian ‘sphere of influence’.

As to details, the conceptions vary. So. for instance, G. D. H. Cole visualizes for Western Europe the possibility of a French leadership if Great Britain would prefer to join hands with America, while Professor Carr definitely considers that France can no longer play any major role. The opinions differ still more widely as to Central and Eastern Europe, i.e. Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Balkan countries. The *Times* and the *News Chronicle* speak simply of these countries as constituting the Russian ‘sphere of influence’ (the *Times* found the striking definition that Russia’s frontiers are on the Oder).

Professor Carr also says only ‘Secondly, just as preponderant weight will properly be given in Western Europe to the views and interests of Great Britain, the same preponderant weight must be given to the views and interests of Russia in Eastern Europe’.

The *New Statesman* goes one better. In the issue of December 26, 1942, we read, 'I do not see Stalin again *allowing* a buffer State between Russia and the West—unless it is within the Russian orbit'.

Others propose an even simpler solution: the outright annexation of these countries by Russia. That is the opinion of Victor Gollancz, that is the opinion of G. D. H. Cole, who writes:

'In that event is it not most likely that the problems of Poland, and of the Balkans and of Hungary will be solved by their inclusion as Soviet Republics within a vastly enlarged State based on the U.S.S.R.'

All these theories are propounded as brand new solutions of the ills of the world, they are supported by a wealth of 'progressive' arguments as to the shrinking of the world, the necessity of large scale planning, the 'obsolescence' of national States and the principle of self-determination, the evils which have resulted from the 'balkanisation' of Europe, which is alleged to have been the main cause of the economic depression in the interwar years and the ultimate cause of the Second World War.

I have written a book to expose the falsity of this last assumption and I do not intend to revert here to this matter. What I want to explode in this article is the assumed 'progressiveness' of all these schemes based on the partition of Europe into the spheres of influence, on the necessity of subordinating the smaller nations to the protection of one Great Power. For in fact it is a reactionary conception, the Carrs and Coles are not apostles of a new creed, but simply disciples not only of Mussolini, the originator of the Four Power Pact, but also of Metternich.

For the most perfect embodiment of the idea that the Great Powers have the right and obligation to exercise a dominating influence on the smaller ones; that an understanding among them means peace for the world, was the Holy Alliance.

The conception of 'spheres of influence' and of maintaining peace by a nice balance of these spheres of influence is not new either. It was the stock-in-trade conception of the imperialist policies. The nineteenth and twentieth century are full of quarrels about and adjustments of spheres of influence between Great Britain and France in North Africa, Great Britain and Russia in Persia and Afghanistan and so on. It is hardly a progressive idea to apply policies used towards colonial and backward peoples fifty or one hundred years ago to the peoples of Europe.

Professor Carr does not hesitate to state what he understands by this conception. He wants that 'preponderant weight' should be given to the 'Views and *interests*' of Great Britain and Russia in their respective spheres of influence. He does not conceal that the interests of Belgians and Dutch, of Poles and Czechs ought to be subordinated to the interests of Britishers and Russians. Is it not pure Metternichism?

The writers of the Left are more cautious. They assure that this solution will be the best for the people of Europe. The *Times* also says that the issue of security in Europe 'will be settled only if those who possess military and economic power on the largest scale and are prepared to exercise it within the confines of Europe organize that power in common for the fulfilment of common purposes and *for the benefit of all*'.

Alas, these beautiful sentiments are reactionary too.

For Professor Carr as well as G. D. H. Cole, the *News Chronicle* as well as the *Times*, know very well, indeed they say it sometimes, that the peoples of Europe do not accept this theory of the dictatorship of Great Britain and Russia, that they object strongly to being considered only as objects of politics. But they simply disregard this fact as completely irrelevant.

They want to make the peoples of Europe happy, even if they object to be made happy on these lines. Is this reasoning not completely analogous to the reasoning of Marshal Pétain, who also believes it to be his obligation to impose on Frenchmen a policy, of which they disapprove, in order to make them happy? Is not the conception of an international 'paternal' government of Great Powers closely akin to the conception which underlay Metternich's Holy Alliance?

In fact, one could say of G. D. H. Cole and the *News Chronicle* what the *Daily Worker* said of some British and American leaders in referring to their attitude to the British Empire:

'They have this in common, that they all see "Europe" as primarily a matter to be settled by the enlightened on behalf of lesser breeds.'

As said above, the basic assumption of the division of spheres of influence is, of course, that this division will be final, that in future the 'spheres of influence' will not clash, that there will be no misunderstanding about them between the leading Powers. Unhappily this assumption is highly questionable.

Louis de Brouckère, who undoubtedly is one of the greatest living statesmen, is sure of the contrary. He said in an article in *France* (March 17), 'If the world is divided in great blocks, necessarily rival blocks, the danger of frontiers will not be diminished, it will be aggravated. There will be less frontiers, but they will be more frightful.'

And James Burnham, in his highly interesting book, *The Managerial Revolution*, who considers that the formation of big units is an ineluctable necessity, warns at the same time that clashes and bloody wars between these units for the domination of the world, are just as inevitable.

* Burnham's book is relevant in another respect to the question we consider. For he is of the opinion that the leading Powers will not be Great Britain, Russia, America and China, but the U.S.A., Japan and Germany.

The British advocates of 'spheres of influence' are too cautious to name brutal Germany as the leading power in Europe, as Burnham does. But they do not exclude the possibility that it might be Germany who will be called to organize Central Europe, or even the whole of Europe.

Professor Carr, who rejects the claims of France to an equality of status with Great Britain, writes:

'The German dilemma can be resolved not by destroying Germany or diminishing her, but by making her a partner in a larger unit in which Great Britain will also have her place. Germany's belated nationalism can be overcome only by *making internationalism worth her while.*'

And G. D. H. Cole states in *Europe, Russia and the future* that 'there does seem to be a possibility of these groupings with the Soviet Union, Germany, and the Western Parliamentary countries as their respective rallying points, and that this triple division offers positive advantages', and in 'Fabian Socialism' he visualizes a possibility of 'a second Soviet Union modelled upon the U.S.S.R., but working under German leadership and with German industrial technique as the main driving force behind them.'

How intoxicated must these people be with the idea of hugeness, of Grossraumwirtschaft, not to realize the profound immorality of a conception which would give to a defeated Germany, a Germany which had looted and murdered on a

scale unprecedented in history, the leadership of the people against whom she had sinned. What a profound, purely Metternichian contempt they must have for the peoples of Europe, for human sentiments not to see that a desperate bloody revolution would be the answer of Europe to any attempt to place it under German leadership.

These phantasies of a Europe ruled by Great Britain and Russia, alone or in partnership with Germany, are, however, not only immoral and reactionary, they are also profoundly dangerous.

For Dr. Goebbels, who knows something about Europe and her sentiments, has already made the most of them.

We assist, in fact, at a curious spectacle. The Germans had started the war with the propaganda of the *Herrenvolk* doctrine, with the conception of a 'New Order' based on the absolute domination of the German people. Dr. Ley spoke even of the resuscitation of slavery for the Poles.

Great Britain went to war in fulfilment of her pledge to Poland and under the banner of liberty and independence for all nations.

Now, in the fourth year of the war, it is Dr. Goebbels who promises a European Charter based on the independence and equality of all nations, and screams at the top of his voice that Germany is defending this independence, and indeed the elementary rights of the European peoples against Great Britain, who wants to subordinate these people to British and Russian interests.

Of course Dr. Goebbels is too shrewd to suppose that anyone in occupied Europe will take his promises seriously. He does not hope that the hate of the German oppressor will disappear, or that the people of Europe will enrol under the Swastika flag against Great Britain. But by publicizing widely the plans of the new appeasers he hopes to break down the *active* fight against Germany in the occupied countries.

He knows that the people of Europe are so—I suppose the *Times* and Professor Carr would call it 'immature'—that for them independence is the supreme goal, and that it is precisely for their independence that they are fighting. Just as the workers of Great Britain did not believe that their 'betters', squires and employers, knew what was good for them, and did fight for their union rights and their political rights, the peoples of Europe believe that their security will be best assured, not if protecting

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Powers will look after it, but if they will themselves have their share in the common defence, have their say in the organization of Europe.

And that's why Doctor Goebbels hopes that if he can persuade the peoples of Europe by quoting British statements that the best they can hope for in the case of an Allied victory is the status of Manchukuo's in a Russian or German co-prosperity sphere they may ask themselves whether it is worth while to risk their lives for such a future.

One word more.

I do not want to create the impression that the peoples of Europe desire simply a return to the *status quo*, to the pre-war pattern of international life, that they cling to the conceptions of absolute national sovereignty.

On the contrary, the reports we get, the articles of the underground press, everything concurs to prove that the necessity of an efficient world organization, the necessity of the establishing of a real collective security, are today profoundly understood in Europe.

Only Europe does not believe that this aim can be achieved by the surrender of the sovereignty of small Powers to great Powers. The underground workers of Europe want an organization to which *all Powers*, great and small alike, would surrender parts of sovereignty.

They want that *all Powers* should be brought under the rule of law. And they want to play their part in this future supranational organization as free people and not as clients of a Great Power.

Three quotations will give the best interpretation of the mood of Europe today.

The Belgian, Louis de Brouckère, speaking of the plans that security should be assured uniquely by the Great Powers wrote:

'In this case the small nations would no longer be associated equal in dignity and liberty. They would be protected and consequently placed, in fact, under a protectorate. They have too profound a love of their independence to accept such a situation for long with resignation and patience. Their dissatisfaction would grow rapidly, and the experience of recent decades has proved that the dissatisfaction even of small nations may be the cause of dangerous troubles for the international order. The whole world would lose in tranquillity what the small nations lost in dignity.'

The Norwegian, C. J. Hambro, President of the Storthing, writes in his book, *How to Win the Peace*:

'It may be inconvenient, it may be cumbrous and bothersome to have to consult representatives of a number of countries. But that is the way of democracy; the road to progress is the resultant of the given composition and of forces.'

And one of the oldest Polish underground papers, *Freedom*, has said:

'International law requires fundamental changes. National sovereignty must be limited by international law, which should provide for supranational regional Federations (Pan-American Union, Central European Federation, etc.) and for a Union of Peoples, a revised League of Nations, but purged of its errors, inadequacies and inertia. A new and broader international law, barring the use of arbitrary force and preferential agreements for the benefit of individual nations must serve as the basis of this reconstruction.

'The principles outlined above are the only foundations on which a stable Western civilization, based on a genuine world outlook, can flourish again. The overthrow of totalitarianism and fascism is the first step towards its rebirth; the repudiation of the pre-war standards in relations between individuals and communities will open the way to a new era, an era that will begin with our victory over the threat of barbarism.'

SHANE LESLIE

A NOTE ON HENRY JAMES

THE Centenary of Henry James crept upon us in the twilight of another war which must vex his watchful ghost as deeply as the first distressed his soul upon earth.

Old friends recall scenes happy or unhappy. Centenaries always produce a spate of such memorial testimonies.

I can only think of the old Sage seated in his garden at Rye, or on memorable occasions watching cricket matches on the saltings at the other end of the town with his back carefully turned on the game while his earnest conversation was addressed to his friends. How happy he was until the crash of 1914!

I met him at a lunch in August of that year when the veil of the Temple was metaphorically rent from top to bottom. He had been invited by an American, but far from tactful hostess, to meet some von Bülowes who had been caught in London, or rather abandoned by the German Embassy in its hurried flight.

Conversation was dancing upon perilous ice. The hostess insisted on bringing it to the subject of Belgian atrocities, in which she declined to believe. Henry James subsided into a napkin! But worse was to come. She began praising the Kaiser, who amongst many superb gestures by land and sea had once condescended to board her yacht. She had had the honour to peel a pear for him!... he could not do it so very well with his injured arm, etc.!

At this Henry James emerged from his napkin like a ruddy volcano under its frail cap of snow, thrust his chair back, called the whole lunch party to order and in one long ominous, speed-gathering, hysterical, overwhelming objurgatory sentence, condemned that unfortunate, but now forgotten, Emperor to comparisons rather in favour of Judas Iscariot.

It was like a thunderbolt falling from the blue at a Watteau picnic. Nobody dared rise. Nobody dared leave. The lunch was very good and I only remember that we finished it in deadly silence and that no faces bore such looks of anguished fear as the von Bülowes, who felt they had been trapped!

I next saw Henry James at the various Committees which launched the first American Ambulance into France under the inspiring lead of Professor Norton. I accompanied it during the winter of 1914 and kept the papers of that gallant but amateurish attempt to succour the Second French Army when their own medical supplies and treatment seemed negligible. Henry James fought our cause with his pen; and his letters of shrill, heavily-sentenced encouragement reached us in France.

I never saw him again in the flesh.

But recently a very intimate friend of his died in London. He had refrained from including the Jamesian letters he possessed in the great Walpolian collection. I was dining with his widow, who mentioned that on his deathbed her husband had recalled that there were some good things left for his friends.

There were boxes of the most fragrant cigars indeed—but alas I could no more achieve a cigar than a great and fragrant sentence of Henry James.

Then I was tempted by some of the last good Napoleon brandy left in London: but, alas, I prefer ginger-pop!

My hostess, a little disappointed, found my weak spot as I left—a huge sheaf of Henry James's gorgeous script on the familiar rubricated note paper. I spent the night of the Centenary sitting up at a military post sorting, restoring, re-reading and copying as fine a collection of literary treasure as I have ever handled. To the Sage of Rye I could dedicate a night of memory and wonder which I should have willingly shared with all true Jamesians.

SELECTIONS

21 Carlyle Mansions.

18 May 1903

'I am sitting to Sargent for my portrait—that is I begun today, and have the next sitting on Thursday next, 22nd. He *likes* one to have a friend there to talk with and to be talked to by, while he works—for animation of the countenance, etc.; and I didn't have one today and we perhaps a trifle missed it. Will you, can you, and should you care to, come for this helpful purpose the next time—on this evening, Thursday, aforesaid? Do if you can. The thing will then be to be at Tite Street by 11.15 say—31 Tite Street, Chelsea. I sit for about 2 hours—make it even 11.30 (I begin at 11). Let me, kindly hear by a word—I *may* then 'apply elsewhere'.

Lamb House.

23 October 1904

'I almost wish your mystic *malaise* were justified so that I might have even better reason for being touched and charmed by it. I mean that I would almost *be* ill to add the deeper note to our harmony. But I am no worse than usual and I hope with all my heart (being, after all, inconsistent here) that your charming Irish presentiments: a real brush of the Banshee!—proving you the Celtic man of imagination like myself—doesn't mean that I am *going* to come any sort of cropper. I shall try hard not to, for I want to hold on to *you*. All thanks at any rate for your beautiful and blessed suspicion, and for your acting upon it, which makes us for the moment communicate—to my extreme joy. We shall do so in London again before too long, for excellent to me is the memory of the other evening, and the new chance will turn up for me to snatch it. But don't, my dear boy, afflict me again by talking of my 'sacrifices'. There is, for me, something admirable and absolute between us which waves away all that.

But these things are beyond words, words almost vulgarize them. Yet the last ones of your note infinitely move me, and I am yours ever so tenderly.

Lamb House.

17 June 1906

'Yes indeed the charming little reddy-brown porous object arrived and I began immediately to dip it into the (as it were) water of your benevolence, so as to let the same trickle over and off me and cool and comfort my battered surface. It is a brave little memento, associated (as I'm a fairly clean creature) with one of the most frequent and regular acts of life and yet promising, I judge, to be stout and *durable* in spite of it—so as to help me feel you about me the longer. I should like to have your Paris from you—keep a plum or two for me from the anecdotic pudding. Yes, Mrs. Mond swam into my ken (she has really a swanlike motor) with Mrs. Clifford on Friday, and was lovely and graceful and charming, and made the best of all the hardships and called you 'dear old J', which made me feel her quite a link (charmingly and rather funnily) and in short much beautified, for the hour, the homely little scene. Today I have an American friend, a Mrs. Charles Hunter has come down to the George but feeds here. Only this word—my cars are considerable. Yours, dear, dear boy, always H. J.

Lamb House.

22 January 1907

'Irresistible to me always any tug on your part at the fine and firm silver cord that stretches between us—as I think I never fail to show you: at any twitch of it by your hand, the machine within me enters into dilation and I respond ever so eagerly and amply! (My image sounds rather like the rattle of the telephone under the effect of a 'call', but I mean it well, and I mean it above all affectionately!) I sit here late this harshly-cold January night—very, very un-Roman, ah me! I read over your letter with a strange mixture of envy and, well, call it philosophy. I am glad you are seeing Rome at your age (which is delicious) and your *siècle* (which offers it to you 'on toast' as they say and on the india-rubber tyres of speed and opulence); but I will talk to you of the ancient paradise of my remote youth—of the time when the awful change wrought within the last 25 years (above all) was still to come. I rejoice at any rate that you are stuffing yourself with impressions and I propose to pick them out of you

plum by plum. Therefore come back as gorged and replete as possible—you will fit the tighter into my embrace! Alas I have never been to Subiaco—nor even to Viterbo: few people have ever rushed about less. It is only just apparent to me, however, that I absolutely can't tread a little in your present steps next month, as I have been almost thinking I might. The dear, good Henry Whites, our American ambassador, asked me some time to come and stay with them from the early part of next month to about the 20th (when they begin to break up for their move to Paris, to which he is appointed); and I have been dallying with the idea. But it is quenched by impossibilities now and it isn't very much the *way* I wanted to go to Rome; (the immense sacrifice of freedom—and all to *Society*!) But I definitely go to Paris, for some stay, by the [way] all the same the days and weeks are passing for me like the small stations seen from a tearing express. So much the better for their bringing you nearer again to yours, don't you see how tenderly.'

Lamb House

9 July 1908

'It was one thing to be greatly touched the other day by your gentle little telegram from passionate Peebles, and quite another to snatch the right moment for responding to you as I desire. The whirlwind that is inevitably let loose on me at this season—whirlwind of people and things, and calls to London, and necessities at home, and general tornado and conflict of complications, is just now rather at its maximum (I got back from a feverish further go at London but yesterday) so that the end is not yet. The foreground of my life is just now much occupied with near or numerous *relations*—very delightful and interesting to see, but with the bump of visiting luggage frequent on my poor old staircase, and the attempted command of my time more or less futile and ridiculous which I mention only to waggle my hand as out of the storm and stress—meaning it as a fond sign that we will make up these rather barren weeks (as far as ones own blest contact is concerned) at some more auspicious hour—which heaven speed! Yes, I just waggle at you a rather distracted head or fatigued hand—or I just hope passionate Peebles wasn't *too* hot for you. I remember how when I last saw you I wanted to breathe upon you an entirely *cooling* affection. I have vast chambers of *that* at your service and through these you will wander

again, in these you will sit again yet with yours always and ever, H. J.'

Lamb House

16 September 1908

'We communicate on unequal terms, you with the unerring gun, I with the scratchy stylograph; yet your sure aim brings me down, as it were, and you "miss" me, and my fond emotion at any sign from you, no more than you missed the excellent brace of grouse, one member of which constituted the all-in-all of my refined repast this evening. Passionate Peebles has again its arms about you, I infer, and I can only congratulate and envy passionate Peebles! I have had only today to wriggle out of an engagement to go to Forfarshire that I had been more or less expecting to abide by—and for reasons (of wriggling) that are good and sufficient, and at all events imperative. The ebb and flow of my brother and *les siens* through my humble home continues, and with more flow than ebb and will till October 6th. But I enjoy it quite enough to wish to profit by all of it and it's awkward for me to leave home. Later on—before next month rattles away—you must give me those promised two days here, remember—to make up for the starvation diet, as it were, on which the fates appear to have conspired for so many months to place us. There are charming days here still, in the midst of the general ruin of weather that I hear of elsewhere and what is conveyed me of the considerable general beastliness in Scotland—though passionate Peebles has, I suppose, a tropic ardour peculiar to it—console me for not making that pilgrimage. Nothing however consoles me for not having you a little more in my existence. So I already hang all wistfully, as it were, about the gates by which Heaven grant you may at no late day re-enter it. Continue meanwhile to adorn the lives of the more fortunate—and even a little to enjoy your own.

(16 September 1908)

'P.S.—I infer that you may *not* be present at your gifted Hamilton's *première* (the 26th I believe?). Forbes R. behaves like—well, the typical mountebank over *my* little piece.

Lamb House

16 July 1909

'I returned last night from a 3 days motoring bout—which an amiable and imperative friend swooped down (Mrs. Wharton) on me just after you left (that Monday) to whirl me off to. We were

three, and the weather was admirable, and this fine old County of Sussex, which we did in detail, is wondrous; but my prized concentration has suffered and I've come back to a mountain of letters, amid which I find your sweet little cluster of hieroglyphics. Burgess assures me that no *coat* of yours whatever remained behind you—not a rag of your elegant drapery has come to light. So I'm not detaining anything as a fond or blest relic—though I should be almost capable of that. May the missing object suffer, at the worst, some other detention—in that spirit. May your present adventures be also otherwise blest to you. Our days together a week ago but confirmed for me (as such always do) the felt beauty of our intercourse. We shall never fall below it—it is the dearest thing possible; and I am, as always, ever so tenderly.'

Lamb House

28 October 1912

'Lady C. has written me, but it's hopelessly impossible. I am simply wretched—and had to go back to bed after your departure (at once) and stay there till noon today. The end seems still far off, and my making an engagement for a London revel or riot in a few [hours] is an idea presented to me (by your *urgent* Lady C.) as in almost cruel derision. I can't *write*, dearest J.; but I am none the less all affectionately yours (seeing you, having you here, the other day, had so all the old charms again!).

'P.S.—I have of course written in adamant terms, yet also honeyed, to Lady C.

'As for the other matter which you oughtn't to have chucked like that into a mis-spelled! postscript but made the subject, given the honours, of a communication by itself, I will with the greatest joy second you at the *Athenaeum* (not "Ethaneum"—horror of horrors!) though I could wish, in view of the amount of waiting involved, I fear, that you had a younger and more blooming sponsor. Who is your proposer?—you ought to have a very good one and not too antediluvian and to have mentioned him to me. But you will tell me this now, when I see you, as I must do before entering my name. Meanwhile, get it into your head that the institution in question takes its name from *Athena*, otherwise (Romanly) Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and patroness of *Athens*, who took *its* name from *her*, and practise writing *Athenaeum* ten times a day.'

Lamb House.

n. d.

'I grieve over the fond dispelled vision of Tuesday a.m., but quite know how when, in the madness of London, one is taken one *is* taken, and that's the end of it. I am engulfed, alas, for Monday, but I respond gladly for the matter of some snatched hour of daylight, or of its garish substitute, and of any little picture-hunt you please. But I don't make out anything as very well feasible except *Tuesday at 5*. Cling to that hour, won't you, for me? to have tea with me somewhere—till, on the spot, I communicate with you more definitely. You are rather lurid about the two Violets—especially about the wicked one; and I am afraid, in fact, that I'm not going up for *her*. Yours then till Tuesday *somehow*.'

Lamb House.

11 August 1914

'It was because I had come to imagine with some intensity that you might have been caught, held up and otherwise made to suffer, on the Continent—like so many unfortunates I still know there; and your wire is now an unspeakable relief. I rejoice with all my heart that you are so present here, and even so near. In normal conditions I should be saying, with urgency, "Can't you *come* here for a night or two and *won't* you, on the spot?"—but everything is so hideously dislocated that one daren't take such possibilities, such pleasant and happy ones, quite for granted. I am *better*, much, in spite of the horrors going on than I was six months ago, and I have my niece and my youngest nephew with me—he caught by the coat-tail just as he was shipping over to Germany on August 1st. They cramp my other hospitality. They are good for me and to me, and will remain till this going back to America can take place on some safe and convenient basis. *Then* you must indeed let me ask for you—as things may stand. But oh! the appalling blackness of it all, and the horror of having lived to see it! We are all alike overwhelmed by that, aren't we? and we can only exchange execrations and dismay, all round—when we speak at all. I think we never generally talked less. But it's a blessing, as I say, to know about you, and it *will* be a delight to see you as soon as the situation makes for our coming together with any ease. I hope you are well and that wherever you are (I don't place you in the country) you are some comfort to somebody—as how can you possibly help being? I myself try

to work to escape turning too abjectly sick. But the thought, the lurid image, that while this loveliness of season and scene here prevails, such things are going on just là-bas, haunts unspeakably.

‘ . . . in the good old days—if any days can be called good that were so villainously leading up to these.’

21 Carlyle Mansions

15 November 1914

‘That any word of mine should in the midst of this strange handling the Fates are treating us to have at all “cheered” you is a great comfort to me here. As I think of you this miserable morning under the lash of the elements I feel that you must need all the cheering you can get. Very interesting to me all the same your pencilled letter of 3 days ago with its suggestion of the stern reality of your conditions and the picturesque variety of your associates. I greatly hope that among the latter you may find some sympathetic or understanding spirit or two. You will probably *live into* all the queerness and roughness of it and find your whole sense of proportion and even of propriety change—this seems to be what happens pretty quickly to most.’

TEMPLE NEWSAM EXHIBITIONS

PHILIP HENDY

I—PAUL NASH

PAUL NASH has always been in the swim. He must have been very young, in the days before the last war, when he joined with men like Sickert and Gilman in the Cumberland Market Group, which was to grow into the London Group. Ten years ago he was very conspicuous when he organized Unit One and a campaign of advancement which included the provinces as well as the metropolis, and in 1936 he took a scarcely less prominent part in the London International Surrealist Exhibition. For two years he was President of the Society of Industrial Artists. This semi-politic activity is due partly, perhaps, to a full

grain of business enterprise in his character and partly also to the sociability and charm which have given him a larger circle of loyal backers than probably any other serious artist.

At the moment he is the hero of two comprehensive retrospective exhibitions in the provinces: one of his Paintings in oil and water colour, from 1912 to 1943, at Temple Newsam, Leeds, which will be open until 20 June (not 6th as advertised), the other of his Applied Design, which has been organized by C.E.M.A. to tour the provinces. For parallel with his career as a painter there has been a career as a designer in many different fields. He earned his first pay by book-plates and, although his War Pictures exhibited in 1918 had made him at once perhaps the most famous painter of his own generation, in the early twenties he was most active with stage design and book illustration. Many will remember his décor for *The Truth about the Russian Dancers*, which he helped to stage in 1920 with Karsavina and Arnold Bax and J. M. Barrie. Intermittently at least, designing must usually have taken as much of his energy as painting. The C.E.M.A. exhibition includes in an extraordinary assortment wood-engraved book-plates and book illustrations, photographs of grouped objects, designs for scenery for Shakespeare, lithographed posters, woven textiles used for upholstery on the London Underground Railway, 'collages' of natural substances and designs for a glass-panelled bathroom for Tilly Losch.

Yet, when Nash held his first exhibition, of watercolours and drawings, in 1912, what attracted the critics and made them ask themselves if a new comet was perhaps appearing in the sky was his almost mystical appreciation of the eerie moods of Nature. He has a sympathy with her which one can claim as characteristically English, a kind of sympathy which traces back at least to the Romantic poets, which was more humanely expressed in the drawings of Samuel Palmer and is being put into robuster terms now by younger men than Nash: by Henry Moore, for instance, and Graham Sutherland. The love for the bones of Nature, for bare downs and empty hollows, for flints and pre-history is something quite different from the Latin love of a teeming and populous earth, savoured by a Courbet or a Renoir almost as a good dish is savoured. In Nash it is a curiously cool, Platonic love, even when it produces the delicious lyricism which is a recurrent theme all through his career, more

insistent in the early days but still pervading, for instance, *The Vale of the White Blackbird*, now at Temple Newsam, of 1942. Here the white blackbird is the only sign of Nash's love of Nature's supernatural moments, of an attraction by the moon which is visible equally in the earliest and the latest exhibits at Temple Newsam, *Falling Stars*, a drawing of 1912, and *November Moon*, an oil of 1943.

This evidence of a lonely communing with Nature, of moments when Nash was quite outside the swim, is in contrast with his success inside it. I should imagine that it represents one of a number of conflicts which on the one hand may have caused a degree of inequality in his productions and on the other have certainly helped to provide the energy which has driven him on heroically in the face of malignant ill-health from one to another of an extraordinary variety of ideas. He is an interesting contrast with his younger brother John, who has always continued to cultivate his own garden in robust tranquillity. Like most artists, and especially most English artists, they have had their failures, but I doubt if Paul Nash has ever painted anything which was not psychologically interesting.

It has not always been easy either to reconcile the mystical lover of nature with the designer of decoration, for decorative design implies fashion and social consciousness. The critics of his early lyrical paintings sometimes wondered whether the topiary work which he executed on his painted trees was only a mannerism or was a new and wonderful way of expressing Nature's moods. Probably it was a bit of both, for on the one hand the hard-cut conventions which he established set a definite limit to his progress into Nature's heart, on the other they are based upon true observation of some of her foibles, expressed, for instance, in the touching, fantastic antics of our English elms. Once one is familiar with his landscape pictures one cannot help often seeing the English landscape itself in the shapes and colours of Nash's design. Some of his most arbitrary, almost abstract compositions contain as contrast with his concocted fantasy little summaries of the English scene which are masterpieces of concise and telling statement. It is, in fact, out of a combination of natural and artificial that he has made his speciality. He has exploited the conflict with great success, though with results in his art of varying quality.

The combination was offered to him most fully and most legitimately by the scene of the last war, and I believe that, young as he was then, the pictures in the Imperial War Museum will always be counted among his finest. The contrast between the work of Nature and the work of man is there made to express a bitter feeling which binds form and expression into one. In the country round Dymchurch, with its great walls against the sea, the combination was offered again by the scene itself, this time without disharmony, and Nash achieved in further drastic simplifications some of his strongest designs, austere and concentrated. Even the eighteen oils in the Temple Newsam Exhibition from the period of 1923 to 1932 show a surprising quantity of different ideas to have inspired the work of a single decade: from the compressed and angular lines, stained with colour rather than painted, of *The Shore* of 1923 to the quite loosely painted *The Edge of the Marsh* of 1925; from *Sandling Park* of 1924, with its eighteenth-century vision contained in a simplified eighteenth-century form, to *Wood on the Downs* of 1929; with its new, clipped, angular forms, its newly discovered relationships between them and its imposition of almost arbitrary diagonals of light; from the *Landscape* painted directly out of doors on the Berkshire Downs in 1927 to *Kinetic Feature* of 1931, a completely 'abstract' composition. *Northern Adventure* of 1929, with its detached window sporting wilfully against an abstract of the approach to St. Pancras Station and the skeleton of a disproportionate bill-boarding erecting on a cloud in the foreground, is already a complete example of the Surrealism which has occupied him increasingly during the subsequent decade. Like the Futurism of long ago, Surrealism increases the number of pictorial possibilities by allowing the juxtaposition in one composition of objects which do not come together in the vision of ordinary consciousness. But the sub-conscious seems to turn too easily in its devotees into the self-conscious, and intellectual or literary allusions have a tendency to drive out the essentially pictorial qualities. I doubt if Surrealism has added as much as it has taken away from the development of painting. Nash, however, can certainly claim to be our first and our best Surrealist painter, and it is on the borders of Surrealism that some of his most fascinating pictures belong, those in which natural objects like flints or tree-roots assume a disproportionate but

magical quality in the foreground of a brilliant secape. In others his now traditional exploitation of the contrast between natural and artificial seems to me to have too little pictorial justification.

This brings us to yet another Paul Nash. Besides the designer and the painter there is also the writer. His first illustrations were to his own poems and he has written brilliant essays about his own experiences and ideas. This literary genius explains yet another aspect of his complex art. From his own writings and from the authors whom he has illustrated, and above all from the ingenious titles which he has invented for his pictures, we must place him, willy-nilly, among the English Romantics. He is in a sense a literary painter. I must make my meaning clear, for I have heard the detailed descriptions of a Stanley Spencer described as literary and Spencer's painting extolled on that account as characteristically English, the prevailing tradition in England being a literary one. This seems to imply a confusion between literary and literal which is hardly fair to Wordsworth or to Constable. When I say that Paul Nash is a literary painter, I mean that the ideas which his pictures express are often literary, are often ideas which could be expressed equally in poetry and which in a picture are inclined to require a poetical title for their full understanding. His ability to put so great a variety of ideas into his pictures is partly due to the fact that the new idea has rarely needed much alteration in technique. He has continued in his original economy of method, wisely, perhaps, for he is usually at his best, I think, in spontaneous, rapid statements, getting confused sometimes when he works them up into more ambitious and elaborate designs. Like almost every painter he has evolved gradually from clearcut constructions in line to looser conglomerations of tone and colour; but he has maintained throughout his habit of comparatively sketchy statement, without building up the solider technique which comes with closer research. Nevertheless the terms of the statement are usually graceful and witty and supported by that one essential of good painting, luminosity. The light which his pale colours create in the more lyrical pictures has an elusive beauty which is quite personal and at the same time is the authentic light of England, while in the Surrealist scenes it is often magically brilliant. Even when their subject seems to be a subject equally for a poem by Lewis Carroll, it is always brillig in Paul Nash's pictures.

E. H. RAMSDEN

II—BARBARA HEPWORTH: SCULPTOR

'OUR perception of natural events and natural objects', says Professor Whitehead, 'is a perception from *within* nature.' As a simple statement of fact which serves to remind man of his primitive dependence this observation is important, but as the formulation of a truth which relates indirectly to all aspects of human genius it is supremely so.

Though open to interpretation in a number of different ways, *Nature* is an inclusive term and the theoretic detachment of man as arrogant as it is fallacious. But the recognition of man's essential unity with the forms of the world brings another acknowledgment, no less inescapable, in its train and one that has particular relevance to the present theme. For if it be said that man's perceptions of Nature are from within Nature, as they indisputably are, then it cannot be denied that his intellectual activities, whether scientific or otherwise, are equally a part of Nature and belong, no less than his instincts and his passions, to the totality we call life. As between the infinite faculties of a man it is not, therefore, possible to make arbitrary distinctions, or to say that one kind of reaction or one form of emotional response is more or less *natural* than another. It may be more or less rare, it may be more or less direct, but that is another thing which has nothing to do with the fundamental character of an impulse. The most abstruse speculation, remote though it may seem from the common concerns of life, is thus as necessarily and, in a sense, as intimately a part of it as the most elementary cognition. So that if, indeed, it may be said of man 'in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!' may it not also be said that his approach to reality is in proportion to his command of the gamut and in the degree of his ability to order the diverse modes of conscious and subconscious experience and to resolve them into harmony.

The achievement of this unity of the many in the one in a perceptible form is the special province of the artist: partly because, being more sensibly aware of the problem than other men, he has no option but to solve it in the measure of his endowment;

and partly because in his highest capacity he exists as an incarnation of the spirit and understanding of his time. To speak of the artist in this sense, however, is to differentiate him not only from the layman, but also from the majority of his fellows. The potentially great in any one generation are therefore necessarily few. But in this, Barbara Hepworth is among them. And there could, perhaps, be no finer tribute to the magnitude of her achievement than that in face of it one should be drawn both to the contemplation of those cosmic relationships which exist between the order of Nature and the mind of man, and to a consideration of the basis and origin of the sculptural instinct itself. In other words, the character of her work is such that it not only satisfies the intellectual passion it excites, but, by the sureness of its plastic quality, which might be said almost to reunite the stone with the earth from which it is taken, it stimulates an understanding of that fundamentally creative impulse from which the will to carve springs. And that this feeling is akin to her own is borne out by what she says, for instance, about scale in relation to sculpture, a quality which she regards as one of the most profound of all. 'Scale', she writes, 'is connected with our whole life—perhaps it is even our whole intuitive capacity to feel life.' And again, 'here, where people respect a stone in a field, one gets the direct impact of man's spiritual reaction to sculpture.' It is true that the 'here' in this case happens to refer to Cornwall and not to Yorkshire, the county to which she belongs, but this is immaterial, since the Cornish countryside has much in common with the North, where the conformation of the land is rugged and of a type that might be expected to produce the woodcarver, the stone mason and the sculptor and to foster his instincts. So that it is, perhaps, not wholly accidental that she and Henry Moore, the two outstanding modern sculptors of contemporary England, should both be Yorkshiremen.

The expression of this innate emotional power, which 'comes from the contours and feel of the earth and the relation of man and woman in this landscape', though it can be recognized intuitively in her work, can hardly be entirely understood without some grasp of another proposition set forth by Whitehead, to the effect that the basis of all apprehension is symbolic. Since, if this were not so, there would be no possibility of finding an equation in plastic terms between what is felt and what is perceived,

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between what is sensed and experienced and what is known. Whereas, the very completeness of the abstraction attained by Hepworth, Gabo, Giacometti and others increases the measure of that agreement by which the quintessence of the visible is carried over and, by some indefinable, but nevertheless precise method of transformation, is reintegrated in modes that are absolute for the sculptor.

There is, however, nothing arbitrary about the way in which this abstraction has been attained, since in Barbara Hepworth's case, as in that of the other Constructivists, the forms have *evolved*; the Single Form being derived from the torso and the Sphere and Pierced Hemisphere from the head. But this development, which is due, not to any caprice on the part of the artist, but to the intellectual tendency of the age, though important, is less momentous than the particular sculptural problems and their solution to which it has given rise. With these problems of pure formal relationship, which have a different meaning and belong almost to a different dimension when conceived apart from the naturalistic, Barbara Hepworth has been mainly preoccupied—a preoccupation that has led to the development of the Two-Form and Three-Form carvings which have introduced new possibilities into the field of sculpture.

In the Kantian meaning of the word these carvings are 'purposive' in two ways. Firstly, they possess a repose that is inherent in the singular perfection of the forms themselves; and secondly, by the infallibility of the way in which they are placed in relation to one another, they generate a movement that is almost perceptible. For it is as if by the juxtaposition of two forms a motion or pull were set up, and of three a second. Or, to put it differently, as if within a given space and in a moment of time the tension which results from the interplay of the centrifugal and centripetal forces of Nature were given palpable form: not, indeed, in the sense that it can be seen, but that, like 'the felt relations of number in music', it can be apprehended. Yet even so, the realization of this dynamic force is not dependent upon the use of two or more forms. It may be realized within the compass of a single figure, as in *Helicoids in Sphere*, and to a lesser extent in certain other examples; but this represents a supreme achievement, as impressive as it is rare.

Whether it be owing to one's longer acquaintance with the

representational or because in her later work the form and the idea are so completely fused that no technical considerations can supervene, one seems to be more consciously aware of the pure plasticity of some of the pre-abstract carvings than of those which belong to her more mature period. Albeit, such an observation testifies to the fact that she has always possessed the sculptor's feeling for form and for tactile values; the breast of a bird and the limbs of a child, for example, being given an exact equivalence in stone or in wood, without sentimentality and without distortion of the medium, but with a vigour and a directness that she has never belied. For even during the most turbulent phase of her career—1933–1934—and a little prior to that the same instinctive feeling for the character of her material persists, just as the masterly control of her handling survives even in the least successful examples of that experimental period during which she was in process of breaking away from the figurative—a period that for any artist who strives towards the abstract might be likened to the serving of a novice—a time during which the austerity of the exercise is unmitigated by the solace of initiation or even by the certainty of its attainment.

Though retaining a distinction of its own, her work at this time bears a certain resemblance to that of Henry Moore and, in a lesser degree, to that of Brancusi and Arp. But while it is a proof of an artist's vitality, rather than a disparagement of his powers, that the work accomplished during a transitional stage of his development should show the influence of his contemporaries more clearly than at any other time, this is probably due, not so much to a conscious or unconscious imitation on the part of the individual, as to the fact that, the *modus operandi* of an epoch being determined, its exponents are inextricably bound to the use of those symbols by which alone its ethos may be embodied and expressed. It is possible, therefore, that the stylization of such a motif as that of a Mother and Child—a motif common to all ages—can only be accomplished at one particular juncture in one particular way. So that in the evolution of organic forms towards the abstract the process for all artists is substantially the same. But beyond this the likeness may be regarded as superficial, owing to the ultimate differences of their artistic creed. Since, whereas for Moore, to whatever extent his figures may be modified, the unity which exists between

the life of man and the universal life of Nature is a unity that is always conceived in organic terms; for Hepworth, whose feeling for landscape and for man's relationship to it is equally assured, it is not the organic element that is important, but the idea or intellectual construction which lies beyond it and is, therefore, in the Platonic sense, precedent.

Thus, in relation to 'the historical outlook for which all data are symbols' the creed of each is valid in its own way, since it is, in fact, by reason of the individuality of their approach, rather than in spite of it, that their work possesses contemporary meaning. It is evident, moreover, that it is not because modern thought is divorced from Nature that it seeks expression in abstract or semi-abstract forms, but because, in its highest manifestations, it is approximating ever more closely to the innermost processes of being upon which the possibility of all formation depends.

If, then, the measure of an artist's intuitive recognition of what is spiritually and æsthetically significant in the thought of his time may be taken as an index of his genius, though not, indeed, of his place in the annals of history which cannot be pre-determined, then Barbara Hepworth's is an endowment of no mean order. But insight is not enough: to it the gifts of interpretation must be superadded, and to these passion, integrity and power. As to her possession of the first, these must abide the judgment of the future; as to the second, they are not in doubt.

PETER QUENNEL

BOSWELL'S PROGRESS—II

'MR. BOSWELL of Auchinleck' had set out from Harwich: it was 'Corsica Boswell' who returned to England. The horizons of the Augustan Age were still agreeably limited. Whole reputations might be founded on some solitary achievement—a single published tour or a clever occasional essay; and in the small homogeneous society through which he moved, the adventurer, once his reputation had been established, found a multitude of

appreciative acquaintances to recognize and welcome him. How much he owed to Corsica, Boswell himself admitted. It was wonderful, he told Paoli at a later period, what the island had done for him, 'how far I got in the world through having been there. I had got upon a rock in Corsica and jumped into the middle of life'. Yes, temporarily at least, the feeling of personal unreality by which he had been haunted had almost disappeared. He stood firm. He looked calmly out at the London prospect; and London seemed to have shrunk in size and to have lost something of that peculiar magnetic charm which, during his first visits, had troubled and obsessed him. Even Johnson 'for some minutes' seemed 'not so immense as before'; while Rousseau, who, having been expelled from Motiers by the Bernese government, had fled to England at Hume's suggestion a few weeks earlier, struck the returned traveller as decayed and elderly. But then, with regard to Rousseau, Boswell's ticklish conscience may well have nagged him; for it had been his privilege to act as escort to Thérèse le Vasseur, and on the journey from Paris to London he had seduced, or had been seduced by, the middle-aged virago with whom Rousseau spent his life—an adventure both unedifying and, as it turned out, unnerving and disconcerting, since 'Mademoiselle', far from paying the tribute he expected to his youth and vigour, had informed him that she found his attentions extremely clumsy; and Boswell, offered instruction in the art of love-making, had been obliged to rush from the room and drain a bottle of wine secreted against emergencies, before he could summon up sufficient courage to embark on a preliminary lesson.

Luckily, it had never been Boswell's way to exaggerate his setbacks. And, compared with the numerous triumphs of the last two years, even the misery he had endured at Utrecht and the inexplicably cool reception he had found at Turin, the snubs or provocations of Italian countesses and the churlish behaviour of his valet, Jacob, finally the partial *fiasco* with Mademoiselle le Vasseur, were fleeting shadows on a career of glorious self-fulfilment. His enthusiasm and self-confidence were again unlimited; and shortly after his return to England the same wave of energy that had brought him back from Corsica carried him into the presence of one of the greatest British statesmen, to whom Paoli had requested that he would bear a message. For this

interview Boswell assumed, not his scarlet-and-gold, his green-and-silver or his flowered velvet suit, but the complete apparatus of a native Corsican chief, with stiletto and pistol, long gaiters and military bonnet completed by a tuft of cock's feathers. The elder Pitt failed to repress a smile, but was courteous and condescending. Pinned to his chair by an attack of gout, 'a tall man in black cloaths, with a white night cap and his foot all wrapp'd up in flannel, and on a gout stool', he gravely questioned Boswell concerning the state of Corsica, but observed that, although for the moment he was out of office, as a Member of the Privy Council he could not properly receive messages from foreign statesman, no matter how worthy the cause they represented. Boswell spoke of Paoli's high regard for Mr. Pitt's character and dwelt on his disappointment at not receiving a reply to a communication he had previously addressed to him, drawing from Pitt a reply in his noblest rhetorical style: 'Sir, I should be sorry that in any corner of the world, however distant or however small, it should be suspected that I could ever be indifferent to the cause of liberty.' With this sonorous recollection, and with the knowledge that he had taken a permanent place in Johnson's friendship—had not his venerable friend, at their first meeting, seized him in his arms and hugged him 'like a sack'?—Boswell during the late Spring made ready to return to Edinburgh.

The mood in which he returned was somewhat apprehensive. Months earlier, beneath an enervating southern sky, at a time when he 'did not THINK, but leap'd the ditches of life', he had considered how very pleasant was his existence, so long as he 'followed purely the inclination of each moment without any manner of restraint', but had reflected sadly that 'this could not last'; for Scotland across the breadth of Europe, 'stared me full in the face'. Yet, once confronted, just as London had appeared somewhat less attractive, so Edinburgh loomed less austere and less forbidding. Self-indulgence, strangely enough, seemed positively to have strengthened his powers of application, and into the next seven or eight months he managed to cram such a variety of work and pleasure that, looking back, he was bewildered and delighted by the distance he had travelled. 'What strength of mind you have had! . . .' he apostrophized himself admiringly. He had been called to the Scottish bar, he had worked and enjoyed his work, preparing briefs, delivering

pleas, arguing and pamphleteering on the subject of a then-famous Scottish lawsuit, till even his father, the dour law-lord, had 'ceas'd to treat him like a boy'. Simultaneously he had been involved in an exciting escapade, had had his 'soul ravaged by passion', been 'in torment with jealousy' and 'felt like Mark Anthony, quite given up to violent love'. His mistress, a certain Mrs. Dodds, otherwise 'Circe', 'Lais' and 'the Moffat woman', had had many previous lovers. She was mercenary, 'ill-bred, quite a rompish girl', but 'very handsome, very lively and admirably formed for amorous [*sic*] dalliance'. Was he right or was he wrong, he demanded of his friend and counsellor, the Reverend William Temple, in what he himself agreed to be one of the oddest letters ever written to a country clergyman. Such a *liaison* might be perilous; but (he protested vehemently) there were worse alternatives. 'Can I do better than keep a dear infidel for my hours of Paphian bliss?'

The bliss he experienced, however, was of an extremely tempestuous sort. There were moments when his feverish imagination presented him with such vivid and horrifying glimpses of his previous admirers 'in actual enjoyment' of Mrs. Dodds as to leave him not only distraught but utterly unmanned. Furious, he would curse her for a 'lewd minx'. Then, suddenly, 'her eyes look'd like precious stones', and he collapsed in a transport of love and confidence. Yet, even in the crisis of his passion, he did not cease to reflect dispassionately on the nature of the sentiment, observing 'how lightly passions appear to those not immediately affected by them' and musing that 'even to yourself will this afterwards seem light'. Amid these emotional tempests—disturbing, of course, but not altogether unsatisfying—Boswell continued to revolve for several months until family duties called him home to Auchinleck. There the passion that had preoccupied him gradually dwindled away; and with astonishment he asked himself if it were 'really true that a Man of such variety of Genius, who has seen so much, who is in constant friendship with General Paoli . . . was all last winter the slave of a woman without one elegant quality?' Meanwhile, as the image of the rompish girl receded, he began to pay his court to his cousin, Miss Blair, a substantial Lowland heiress, who first encouraged, then eluded him and finally aroused his resentment by permitting the advances of a rich East-India merchant.

But Boswell's chagrin was neither serious nor protracted; and, when he left Auchinleck and returned to Edinburgh, Mrs. Dodds (who during the interval had borne him an illegitimate child) once again figures in his private journal, till she drops quietly out of the record, never to re-emerge.

Such was the usual course of Boswell's passions. Varying in their scope from chimerical aspirations for attractive heiresses, or for any young woman who sat next to him at dinner, to lively infatuations for delightful, deceptive creatures of the type of Mrs. Dodds, they boiled up quickly but, after a period of intense excitement, died down as abruptly. His love-affairs were seldom edifying and often commonplace; but never quite commonplace was the effect they produced on Boswell's imagination or the response that they evoked from his peculiar sensibility. Behind the amorist lurked always the literary analyst. To Boswell his sensations and impressions were always new and strange. How odd were the interactions of vice and virtue! How curious to observe that, after some particularly acute crisis of sensual satisfaction, one felt not only a calmer and stronger, but also a more virtuous man! Thus, finding an uncommon degree of contentment in the embraces of an Edinburgh strumpet named Jeany Kinaird, he 'very philosophically reasoned that there was to me so much virtue mixed with licentious love that perhaps I might be privileged. For it made me humane, polite, generous'. Yet, though he adored variety, he aspired to constancy. The least consistent and the least circumspect of human beings—a man, indeed, whose chief value consisted in the protean quality of his intelligence and the extreme facility with which he plunged into the lives of others—he had set himself an ideal of complete composure. By disposition exceedingly active—except for those periods when a fit of hypochondria temporarily deprived him of the power to act and enjoy—was action really necessary to human happiness, he would demand of his acquaintances. Dr. Blair considered it might be: Boswell gave enthusiastic support to the contrary opinion: 'You said Yes, but only as a remedy to distempered minds. The sound and perfect human being can sit under a spreading tree like the Spaniard, playing on his guitar, his mistress by him, and glowing with gratitude to his God. Music, Love, adoration! There is a Soul!'

Meanwhile, his travels abroad had paid him a literary dividend.

The *Account of Corsica*, published during February 1768, created considerable stir even as far afield as Paris, where Madame du Deffand spoke of it appreciatively to Horace Walpole; and on 17 March the author set out for London. He was uneasy, however, 'at leaving Mary'. To this 'pretty, lively little girl', another Jeany Kinaird, Boswell had recently become much attached. Before he left, he deposited with her as many guineas as she assured him she could live upon till his return; but then, with a touch of romantic inquisitiveness, inspired, it would seem, by one of Cervantes' long short-stories embodied in *Don Quixote*, he persuaded two separate friends 'to promise to go to her and offer a high bribe to break her engagement to me, and to write to me what she did'. What, in fact, Mary did do is not recorded. As Boswell hurried excitedly down the Great North Road, any hopes he had founded on her fidelity appear to have been soon forgotten, and he lost himself in an agreeable reverie concerning his present and past life. Today (he observed) he felt 'quite strong'. Indecision had vanished, and with it the exaggerated instability, emotional and intellectual, that at one period had tormented him. Then his mind might have been compared to 'a lodging house for all ideas who chose to put up there'. The lodgers had been of every description. Some (he continued) gentlemen of the law had paid him handsomely. Divines of every sort had visited him and troubled his peace of spirit—Presbyterian Ministers, who made him melancholy: Methodists, whose eloquence had moved his feelings: Deists, whose scepticism perpetually alarmed him: Romish clergy, who filled his imagination with solemn splendour and who, though their movable ornaments had since been carried away, 'drew some pictures upon my walls with such deep strokes' that traces of their tenancy were still discernible. Moreover, he was obliged to admit, there had been raffish company, 'women of the town' and 'ladies of abandoned manners. But I am resolved that by degrees there shall be only decent people and innocent gay lodgers'. A certain bustle and confusion was still to be expected; but his mind was now 'a house where, though the street rooms and the upper floors are open to strangers, yet there is allways [*sic*] a settled family in the back parlour . . . and this family can judge of the ideas which come to lodge.'

Neither this resolve, nor his determination to resemble an

impassive Spaniard, who glowed with gratitude to the Deity and worshipped a single mistress, were fully reflected in the adventures of the next few weeks. For, no sooner had Boswell arrived in London, on 22 March, taken lodgings in Half Moon Street and unpacked his trunk, than he 'sallied forth like a roaring Lion after girls'. Next day he witnessed an execution—a type of spectacle that, in common with George Selwyn, he much appreciated—noticed that the first malefactor was deathly pale and watched the second, a prim Quakerish middle-aged man, composedly eat a sweet orange with the rope around his neck while he listened to the prayers of the Newgate ordinary. Johnson, he had learned, was staying in Oxford; and on the 26th, in a crowded stage-coach, along roads that resounded with 'Wilkes and Liberty' (a battle-cry that, together with 'No. 45', was chalked on the panels of every passing carriage), he drove down to the citadel of High Church Toryism. Like many other apparently tactless men, he had the gift of the right gesture. And nothing could have been better calculated to appeal to Johnson than the eagerness with which Boswell had rushed to meet him. "What," said he, "did you come here on purpose?" "Yes, indeed," said I. This gave him high satisfaction; with the result that he showed a flattering interest in Boswell's stories and professed surprise at his account of the sums he had already gained by his practice of the law. 'He grumbled and laughed and was wonderfully pleased. "What, Bosy? two hundred pounds! A great deal".'

The main chapter of Boswell's existence was now fully and fairly begun. That much of its interest was derived from Johnson, and that the magnificent portrait he gave to the world in 1791 provided him with the spiritual justification he had long and vainly sought, are facts generally accepted since his book appeared. But that Johnson was by no means the *whole* of Boswell's life is a point of which recent biographers have been at some pains to remind us. Throughout two decades Boswell was Johnson's devoted follower; but it has been calculated that, during that space of time, there were only eight hundred and seventy days on which their physical circumstances would have allowed a meeting,¹ and on many of those days there is not the smallest evidence that they actually met and talked. At three separate

¹ See *James Boswell*, by C. E. Vulliamy, 1932.

junctures they were separated for a period of over two years. Each had his habits and his round of pleasures, Johnson his intimacy with Mrs. Thrale, that strange and touching *amitié amoureuse* which closed in sudden bitterness when Mrs. Thrale remarried: Boswell, his career as a successful Scottish advocate, his life as a husband and father, the hundred-and-one remarkable episodes in which his curiosity, his sensuality and unconquerable restlessness successively involved him. Yet Johnson remained a fixed star in his admirer's universe—the guardian of moral law, the embodiment of conscience, treated by him, nevertheless, as consciences are sometimes treated, with regard and awe, into which a good deal of evasion, not to say duplicity, very often entered. If his venerable friend *could* be persuaded to supply the right excuse for something that Boswell was privately determined to do, the disciple enjoyed the consciousness of being the happiest and best of men. Could he, for example, but induce Johnson to say a word, founded on classical or Biblical texts, for the polygamy that Boswell felt more and more inclined to practise! . . . But Johnson showed an uncommon aptitude for brushing aside the various moral sophistries in which Boswell, at one time or another, endeavoured to engage him; and the younger man went his own way, uncomforted but undeterred.

Just how much one knew of the other, we can never exactly tell. In Johnson's life there were dark tracts—abysses of gloom and nervous fear and superstitious horror—that Boswell merely skirted (though Mrs. Thrale had many terrifying glimpses into the depths of Johnson's desperation); while in Boswell's there were large territories of adventure and experience that, so far as Johnson was concerned, he left prudently undescribed. Few associations have been more productive; yet from its history, as from the history of most friendships and almost every love-affair, emerges the essential separateness and solitariness of individual human beings. Boswell could console Johnson, but he could not help him: Johnson's affection provided Boswell with the support he needed, but the good advice he so often gave was very rarely taken and, had it been taken, we may doubt if it would have conduced to Boswell's ultimate advantage. Suppose that he had stayed at Auchinleck and minded his estate, that he had remained sensibly in Edinburgh and laboured in the Scottish courts—he would have kept out of debt, pleased Mrs. Boswell, brought up

his five legitimate children in comfort and security; but he would at the same time have been untrue to that mysterious guiding spirit which, though it ruined his health, impaired his fortune and destroyed his happiness, at last produced the justification he had always been in search of—‘my Magnum Opus’ or (as he described it prophetically in a letter to his faithful confidant, the Reverend William Temple) ‘without exception, the most entertaining book you ever read.’

CORRESPONDENCE

HILLARY AND THE SUBMERGED GENERATION

Dear Mr. Koestler,

This letter is occasioned by your article on Richard Hillary in *HORIZON*: I say ‘occasioned by’ and not ‘in answer to’, because what I would like to do is not specifically to quarrel or agree with you, but to try to amplify some of your remarks from the viewpoint of someone in Hillary’s position. It would be presumptuous to claim anything of Hillary’s qualities, or of his insight and sincerity; all I can say of myself is that I am of his generation, less two years; that I am from a public school and Oxford; that I am about to go into action with an army wherein not many young officers do survive, and that these similarities do give me a little shadow of understanding of what must have been Hillary’s state of mind when he was waiting, as he did wait so strangely, to die. You had the honour to be his friend, and knew him far more intimately than a stranger can from his book, his letters, and those who knew him: but throughout his book I came on passages which seemed to speak so much for all of us that I was astonished how much can be felt in common between many men, which seems at first esoteric and incommunicable.

I have talked so much with friends in the same position, who face a probable death, trying to probe and analyse their attitude in order to understand my own, and always it comes back to the same dead end: we don’t know; we don’t even feel; we accept, and we know we must accept this extraordinary rôle which we must play, with an absence of bitterness which is inexplicable. There is no disillusionment, because there have been no illusions. We have faith, but no real Faith. I can’t accept your definition of the ‘heretic crusader’, for that suggests an attitude far more positive than most of us possess. ‘Agnostic crusaders’ would be nearer the mark. Taking myself as my own guinea-pig, and checking my observations with other people, I would suggest that there are two great components of our attitude towards our future. First, an ignorance of what we are fighting for which no amount of propaganda or religion will enlighten. As you say, it is a different war to the newspaper ‘Men Who Know No Fear’ stunt, and one which will never coalesce with it. We are not fighting for England in the charming Rupert Brooke sense or the stirring

Newbolt sense. We are not fighting for democracy—many are temperamentally anti-democratic. We are not even sure that we are fighting for the external verities, as our fathers were—and are—so magnificently certain. Our standards of battle are banners without marks. But against that ignorance we have an obscure and (for us) quite inexplicable faith that to fight and to die is right, and perhaps the best thing we can do for this wretched world. Don't understand me to say that we believe war to be right as such: as you know, we detest and loathe it. Yet, for some reason, we are prepared to fight for something which we don't know, which we can never express. Perhaps there is no faith without ignorance. All religions are based on a confession of ignorance, the great *Nescio*. But what *is* this faith, which seems to have no object; can we never know?

This is the background on which we fight; the foreground is occupied with this business of friendship and good fellowship, which has acquired a monumental importance, as though because of a common faith, that we are drawn so close to our friends that they fill all our consciousness, and in some queer way embody all we believe in? It seemed the same with Hillary; in my own circle I find the same—a shield of affection which can hold out the horrors of the night outside. We depend almost desperately upon one another. The loss of a friend is a tearing of your soul, and if friends are lost we replace them by a stopgap of acquaintances, parties, drinks, anything to give security. Sometimes, whatever happens, you find yourself alone: and then there comes a wild regret for all the beauty and splendour of life, a passionate longing for a golden and exaggerated past. Even then our odd negative faith keeps out bitterness. We are still ready to die. Perhaps the shadow of death does heighten our senses, makes us see beauty more fully and makes us live every moment as deeply as we can. There is such a lot to be crowded in. Please God if I survive that I don't lose this intensity of life.

These are the main points which I did find in Hillary's book which so many of us had felt inarticulately for so long: a desperate ignorance, and absurd faith in spite of it, a deep trust in the value of friendship and a great joy in living. Perhaps the knowledge that Hillary shared these things with many others may help you to understand him better, to distinguish what was individual in his situation and what 'communal'. Perhaps, also, your insight into his position, and its relationship to society (for want of a better word) in general, may lead you to see things more clearly than we can and help our groping efforts to understand our situation. That is why I have written to you: so please forgive me for having done so, and for having expressed myself so haltingly.

Yours sincerely,

Lt. Michael Howard

Dear Mr. Koestler,

22 April

Having read your article on Richard Hillary in *HORIZON* I feel impelled to write to you; it was a ray of light for many of those in my position and it is that position I want to try to describe and clarify, for Hillary is typical of us; he was killed before he had time to evolve a philosophy which might have

led the way and helped those in similar straits. You seem to have grasped what he was driving at in a way that no one else, with experience in writing, has been capable of.

I find this letter very hard to write for fear that you may receive the wrong impression and dismiss the whole thing as an imposition of another morbid, introspective being.

I was a contemporary of Hillary's at Oxford though I did not know him. I have been in the Army since September 1939, though have not yet fired a shot in anger. I have done a certain amount of flying and am hoping to get an Army flying job. I am an Artillery officer aged 24½. More than anything else in the world I want to write.

There are six points on which I set out to base the contents of this letter and I am certain that they do apply to a number of others besides myself, for I have met such people.

I. We are terrifyingly uncertain of ourselves. This factor is the crux and it goes deeper than the usual and healthy self-mistrust of the artist. 'Carriion Comfort' comes nearest to expressing the fear, and Hopkins, in spite of all, had a staunch faith. This lack of self-confidence leads naturally to introspection which in turn becomes unhealthy if not checked; most modern poetry is surely the result of undiluted introspection. Yet introspection is what we most ardently desire to control in order that we may turn it to other ends using it as a force, not being driven as a slave before it.

II. Following naturally out of I arises a sense of frustration that reaches the stage of desiring self-destruction; I can see that Richard Hillary often succumbed to the desire to be killed, as do so many (this wish is often subconscious) other sensitive young men in the Forces. This sense of frustration is due to the overpowering vulgarity of the Press, the radio, advertising and the like instruments of propaganda that overwhelm the nerves of the mind by their persistence and universality. We are cut off in a world that wants 'quick results', aims at fostering the 'technician' (no matter whether journalist or bomb designer), who can be useful to the State. We are and we know we are anachronisms, yet we are desperately attempting to be otherwise.

III. Having been born into an age in which all previous ages had been successfully 'debunked', we could have no heroes on which to base our lives. Young, we had to make our way in a world where all things seemed to have been done and finished with (always barring the desire for increased scientific efficiency). There was one man whom we all admired—T. E. Lawrence; even the most disillusioned cannot resist a god of some sort; Lawrence typified our feeling, he had within his power the ability to do anything, yet seemed unable to achieve what he wanted, for he did not know where his real ambition lay, 'between the conception and the creation lies the shadow', as T. S. Eliot says.

IV. I think we have moral integrity. We put all ideas to a searching analysis and so many ideas are thrown up before us that it is almost impossible to form any coherent system. Life becomes a dream of sharp, unrelated impressions and ideas, none more than a fleeting glimpse of what we are seeking for.

V. We are seeking for a philosophy or a basis and do not know where to turn. Now as it is late it is peaceful. I have a little time to myself but never enough in a stretch; it is impossible not to be tired most evenings, for they

keep us at work till after 6 most days. Since all not engaged on productive work after the war will be drones, what hope is there of ever achieving this long-drawn process of working something out? A university don might, but they (the controlling authorities whom I cannot see relaxing their grip) will want people who are proficient at assimilating masses of facts and other people's ideas.

VI. Lastly we must, as you will probably have gathered, go alone. Half unwillingly we were thrown into this war, doubting the results of the issue, knowing the futility of war, yet we were not able to stay out. To belong to a pacifist clique—never, never, I know too many of them; there is something nauseating; I read in a translation of a Greek poem that the young men who stay at home and watch the old men fight are to be despised above all others, for some strange reason it is so. Yet it cannot be otherwise than embittering to see many young potential writers at home—in peace on land work, having time to practise their writing. Please do not think that I take this last point too much to heart, for all must have the right to their convictions, yet it exists and with it the dread that they will steal a march on us and gain the mediums of expressing their thoughts to the exclusion of ours.

My purpose in writing all this is not for sympathy but for help. How? That I must leave to you. 'Darkness at Noon' showed me that you have been through worse, and have succeeded in gaining some strength that I do not possess or know how to find.

There is one thing that I should like to say. It would be of inestimable help if you and other writers like you would, knowing our predicament and desires, be prepared to meet us and talk to us; the barriers will be hard to surmount, time, place and persons (i.e. natural reserves that arise from the meeting of two or more people unknown to each other). I feel it might bear fruit and even if we are too misbegotten it would give pleasure on our side.

Yours,

Eversley M. G. Belfield,
Lt. R.A.

P.S.—The following epitaph from Aeschylus fits Richard Hillary.

'They sent out lads to fight
with faces known and gay;
and they get back at length
ashes in urns.'

Agamemnon

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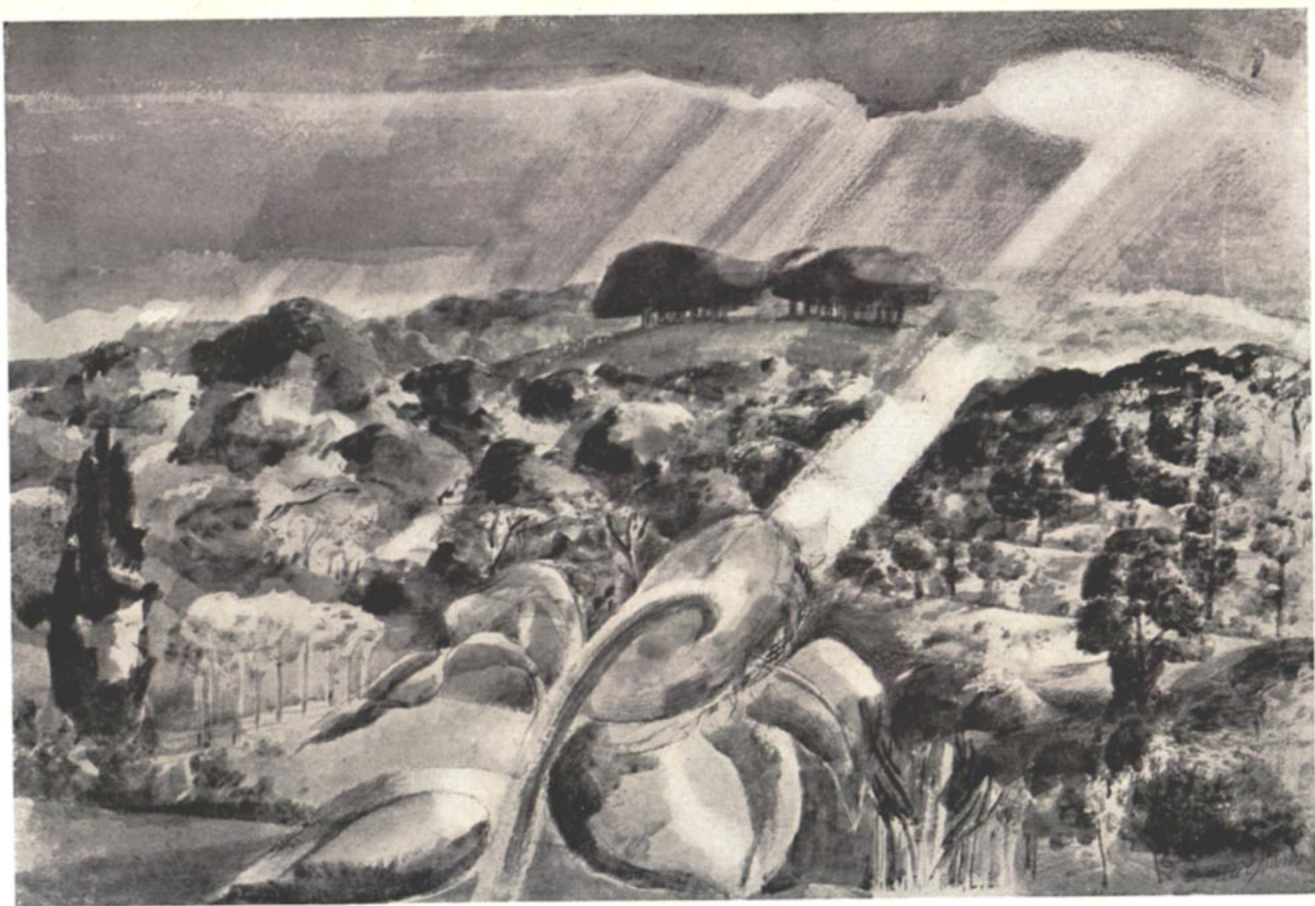
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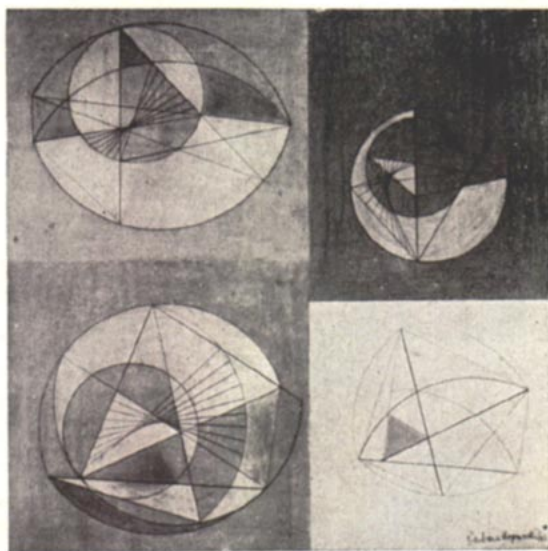


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